american socialist monthly

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Book Reviews by Benjamin H. Wolf, Frank N. Trager

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Notes of the Month

Great Britain: Pivot of World Politics

Once more Great Britain becomes the pivot of world politics.

First, there is Great Britain's attachment to Hitler's Germany. It was England that restored Germany to its present military power. This Anglo-German entente, which has been operative for the last few years, has been based upon England's desire to use Germany as a counter-weight against France or Italy or both, so that Britain might hold the balance of power.

Second, there is Britain's most recent move toward a Franco-British-Belgium alliance, publicly announced the day after the German - Japanese - Italian alliance. British diplomacy, through "unofficial" sources, lets it be known that it looks askance at the Japanese-German agreement, since it appears as a threat to the Dutch East Indies, hence to Singapore, hence to British power in the Far East. This Far Eastern complication is used as a net to drag in the United States. The result in America is that the "isolationist" Republican Landon - Liberty League Herald Tribune denounces the anti-communist pact of Japan and Germany, talks about America's need for far-away alliances, and—o tempora o mores!—finds itself pursuing the same line of foreign policy as the *Daily Worker*.

Third, there is Britain's class-conscious anti-Soviet, anti-Spanish Loyalist bias. England is chiefly responsible for the "non-intervention" agreement. England is dropping heavy hints that it is not Germany or Italy that is responsible for foreign interference in Spain, but the Soviet Union. And it is England that acts as Hitler's democratic "man" in lining up the "democracies" to buy off Germany and Japan by throwing the Soviet Union to the fascist wolves.

Three things are clear from the present developments:

First, there is an alliance of "revisionist" powers in the world today strong enough to begin a war for the redivision of the earth's surface.

Second, in the event that the Soviet Union should face victory it must expect the united attack of the entire capialist world.

Third, isolationist America will in the next few months find itself sucked into the international whirlpool.

Labor's Friend in Action

The chance to test by experience the theory under which the bulk of labor and liberal leaders supported the re-election of Roosevelt has come even more quickly than might have been expected. Within a few weeks of the election, Roosevelt has shown his hand openly in two decisive political issues, one internal, the other external.

Internally, the Administration has launched a frontal attack on the WPA rolls. With unprecendented ruthlessness, project after project is being slashed to the bone, and the attempts of the workers to meet the attack are being countered by every form of intimidation. It is reported that Roosevelt, just before leaving for South America, issued the simple order, "Cut WPA 20%," and left it for his subordinates to work out the ways and means.

There seem to be two chief reasons for the WPA cut. The first, and more important, is the need for flooding the labor market with workers both unemployed and cut off from relief, in order that they may act as a weight to counterbalance organized attempts to raise wage levels in line with the upward swing of the business cycle. Finance-capital wants to be assured that the maximum percentage of renewed "prosperity" will flow into profits, not wages, and as always the capitalist state puts its powerful shoulder to their wheel. Second, the Administration is anxious to approximate so far as possible the demands of the bankers for a budget more nearly balanced, and relief expenditures are the only item where the bankers will permit large scale reductions.

Externally, Roosevelt has taken over personal leadership of the diplomatic expeditionary force organized in Buenos Aires by American imperialism. Under the hypocritical slogans of "Peace" and "Democracy," American imperialism announces that it is ready to meet all comers in asserting the hegemony of United States finance-capital in the exploitation of both continents of the New World. In a conference cluttered with the representatives of the tyrannical military dictatorships of the South American nations, Roosevelt's speech to the opening session promised toleration toward any degree of local despotism so long as United States investments and trade are given right of way. To the rest of the world, his speech announced: American imperialism, with the two Americas as its base, prepares its challenge for world supremacy. And Roosevelt's speech was appropriately backed up by the simultaneous announcement of several great new super-dreadnoughts (ships suited purely for openly offensive warfare), a large group of lesser battleships, a new type of bomber more powerful than anything similar in the world, and new plans for the increased mechanization of the army.

Thus once more the policy of the "lesser evil" receives its decisive refutation by events. How would Landon have acted? It is doubtful that he could have got away with the drastic WPA cut; Roosevelt is able to, precisely because he so skillfully drew the teeth of labor. And as a world representative of American finance-capital, Landon would have proved a babe in arms compared to Roosevelt. Within less than a month, the policy of the socialist campaign gains startling confirmation. The issue was and remains: Socialism vs. capitalism, now and until the final conflict.

People's Front in France

The experiences of the French People's Front government will undoubtedly serve as a deterrent to future attempts at setting up coalition governments of this, or any other, type. Unstable in character from the very beginning, it has begun to show serious signs of disintegration. First, the right wing of the People's Front, the Radical Socialist Party, threatened, at its congress, to take leave unless serious concessions were made by Blum. Carefully staged to throw fear into the camp of the People's Front, the immediate result of that congress was a definite drift to the right by the government, expressed particularly in drastic action against strikes and threats of occupation of factories. The non-intervention pact with regard to Spain was also forged largely under the pressure of the Radicals. But on the "left" side of the People's Front there are also appearing deep fissures, indicative of the ferment going on inside. The

action of the communists in refusing a vote of confidence to Blum, leading to a threat by Blum to resign, because of dissatisfaction with the Spanish policy cannot be easily dismissed. This abstention, carrying with it the threat of future opposition, is an open warning to Blum. Can he continue to ignore this warning? Can he continue to disregard the obvious demands of the masses of French workers that assistance be given the Spanish government?

Of course it is true that the communist policy is determined not by any principled considerations, but by a desire to capitalize on the dissatisfaction with the government. They condemn Blum's non-intervention policy, but support that of the Soviet Union, which is exactly the same. They urged and agreed to participation in the government before the elections, but when the elections returned a strong delegation of communists they decided to keep out of the government. But the lack of principle of the communists does not justify the line of Blum. On the contrary, Blum plays right into the hands of the communists.

In other respects also the People's Front government is proving a failure. The wage increases which were won at the beginning of its regime have been more than wiped out by the rising prices following upon the devaluation of the franc. The action by the government against the fascist organizations, which was supposed to be one of the main justifications for the setting up of the People's Front, has been of a negligible character. The fascists are more active, and more daring than ever.

In brief, all the forces for a deep political crisis are gathering in France. And when it breaks, the People's Front government will be held responsible by the masses. The fascists and reactionaries will be the gainers.

This has happened before—not in France. In Germany. It will happen wherever and whenever a working class party, or a combination of working class parties, tries to operate the state machinery inside a capitalist country without disturbing the economic foundations of the social order. It will happen even more surely if the attempt is made to operate the state apparatus in partnership with some "liberal" capitalist parties. Coalition, whether under the name of People's Front, or any other, cannot promote the interests of the workers. In the long run it defeats its own objectives and plays into the hands of the enemy.

Welcome, Labor Action

Perhaps the most important propaganda arm of any movement is its press. The strength of the Socialist Party will be increased in direct ratio with the growth of its press in quantity and in quality. It is impossible for the party to have too many papers, reaching all sections of the working class and all parts of the country.

The appearance of *Labor Action,* the new socialist weekly published in California, is a welcome proof of the growth and of the vitality of the movement in that state. California has, since the war, been an important focal point in the class struggle in America. The Mooney case, the use of vigilantes to break up the San Francisco general strike in 1934, the persistent use of terrorist tactics to smash labor organizations in the Imperial Valley and elsewhere, are merely outstanding examples of a struggle that, for bitterness, cannot be surpassed elsewhere. Added to this circumstance is the notorious fact that nowhere is the radical movement so beset by crack-pot schemes as in California. EPIC, Utopia, Inc., the

Townsend movement all originated in its sunny climes.

If, in the face of all this, the Socialist Party of California has not merely survived, but is actually growing; if it feels strong enough to launch a weekly paper, the whole Socialist Party has cause to congratulate itself.

Long life and more power to *Labor Action.* May it soon have companion papers in all important industrial centers in the United States.

The Seamen's Strike

Perhaps more than any other single event in recent years, the present strike of the seamen on the Pacific, Atlantic and Gulf ports shows that there is something radically wrong with the manner in which the American trade union movement conducts its business. On the Pacific Coast, the strike is an official one, called by the regularly constituted local seamen's union and recognized by the International Seamen's Union, the parent body. On the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, the seamen staged a practically spontaneous walk-out in sympathy with the Pacific strike, but the leadership of the I.S.U. declared it an "outlaw" strike and has in fact been engaging in the worst type of strike-breaking activities. Had the I.S.U. leadership had the interests of the membership at heart, they would not have waited for the spontaneous action by the men, but would have utilized an extremely favorable time to secure improvement of conditions and a stronger union hold upon the industry. But they waved the old stand-by of the "sanctity of the contract" to justify their strike-breaking actions. The contract had been signed by them, without submitting it to the union's membership, at a period of low ebb in the industry, when conditions were extremely bad. Even if their explanation that it was necessary to agree to the bad terms of the contract in order to preserve the unions is acceptable, their refusal to take advantage of an extremely favorable situation for the purpose of discarding that contract should cost them the leadership of the union.

The truth is that the old-line leadership of the union, with old Andy Furuseth practically retired, is made up of individuals who exist by making deals, both contractual and other kinds, with the steamship lines, some of them having extensive city and country residences and also fair sized bank accounts which far exceed their possible incomes either as seamen or as union officials. These leaders are thoroughly discredited. If there were a free election, there is no doubt that not one of them could retain his position. But they control the machinery of the union, and at present also its status both legally and in the American Federation of Labor. This control they intend to use.

The strike of the seamen deserves the support of every class-conscious worker. And it is to be hoped that as a result of this strike, the seamen will succeed in getting rid of their present officials and electing a set of officials who will fight for the men and not for the steamship companies.

Revamp the Social Insurance System

A few years ago the Socialist Party was alone among political parties of the United States in raising its voice in behalf of social insurance. All other parties were engaged in characterizing such systems as utterly paternalistic and foreign to the traditional system of American individualism.

The logic of events, however, finally compelled both Republicans and Demo-

crats to accept in principle the need for some system of social insurance. During the past few years, they have been experimenting with "57 varieties" of social insurance legislation. In doing so they have, as usual, when adopting a plank from the immediate demands of the Socialist Party, utterly emasculated the socialist proposals and today the so-called social security legislation of the United States and the various states is a veritable crazy-quilt of inconsistencies. The social insurance laws recently adopted are utterly inadequate and unsound, failing lamentably to take into account the years of experience in social insurance legislation of foreign lands.

The Socialist Party maintains today, as formerly, that the United States should have as its goal in this type of legislation the development of a comprehensive, well coordinated federal system of social insurance, embracing old age pensions, unemployment insurance and health insurance. It contends today, as formerly, that, to make certain of the development of such a system, it is necessary to adopt the Workers' and Farmers' Rights Amendment to the Constitution or some similar amendment. The recent decisions of the United States Supreme Court in connection with the social insurance law indicates by what a tenuous thread even a mild state insurance law hangs.

In the second place, we must press for a system of health insurance. The United States stands almost alone among industrialized countries in failing to enact compulsory health insurance laws.

Thirdly, we must make eligible for the receipt of old age assistance all needy people of 60 years of age and over. We must raise the benefits given to the aged to an average of $50 a month, and we must see to it that the old age assistance funds are supplied from taxes levied on the basis of ability to pay.

Fourth, we must reorganize the old age annuity system and see to it that the contributions come not primarily from employer and employee, contributions which inevitably lead to higher living costs and lower real wages on the part of the masses, but from progressive income and inheritance taxes. We must greatly enlarge the numbers included under the act, and must avoid the dangers inherent in the building up of the huge reserve fund which is being planned under the present system.

Finally, we must make the unemployment insurance system a national system, raise an increasing proportion of the fund for the payment of unemployment benefits from taxation, increase the benefits given to the jobless; give unemployment benefits throughout the full period of involuntary idleness and bring within the provisions of the act domestic servants, agricultural workers, employees in educational and charitable organizations and in small establishments.

These changes will not be brought about except through the most vigorous and effective action on the part of labor and progressives. Socialists throughout the country should take the leadership in an immediate attempt thoroughly to reorganize our social insurance system.

For A Party of Struggle

Various and sundry were the evaluations of the Cleveland Convention, but few indeed recognized how far along the route of class-struggle Socialism the central convention slogan would take us. "Socialism versus capitalism" seemed to be merely a re-affirmation of the core of Marxism—necessary at a time when other working-class parties were floundering in a sea of opportunism. In fact, it could have, and perhaps in some places

did, become undistinguishable from SLP-ism. But where its meaning rose out of the living class struggle of daily experience: Spain and dangers of war—maritime and other strikes—CIO—there it became a slogan of challenge, of awakening to the deeper significance of a class party of struggle.

Shortly after the campaign came to a close,—a campaign typical of America's quadrennial game of "in-again-out-again Finnigan"—the National Executive Committee met in New York to estimate its past but primarily to plan for the future. Quarterly meetings of this highest ruling body of the party have come and gone leaving little positive impression; but this one set a high mark of thought and action. Without at all minimizing the serious problems facing the party: small vote, inefficient handling of the campaign in some quarters, failure to take full stock of certain crisis situations in the party, need for reorganization in the field and replacements in the office, urgent structural changes in the party to make it more flexible and efficient in handling central problems, and utmost clarity and dispatch in formulating policy and issuing directives to a party national in character as well as in name—this NEC took thought, formulated policy, made first steps toward party reorganization, and decided that the consummation of this arise out of the democratic decision of a special national convention to be held in Chicago the last week in March 1937.

The prime emphasis of the party emerging out of the decisions of this NEC is directed toward disciplined socialist activity within mass organizations. The goal is to recruit a new mass base. In these organizations, and within the party as well, socialists by their daily activity, by their leadership in progressive measures, legislative, economic, and political, should try to awaken the American working class to an increasing concern for, and participation in, the struggle between Socialism and capitalism. The NEC decided that if there were possibilities for launching of a national farmer-labor party, federated, democratic and independent, the Socialist Party would take its place in the ranks of farmers and workers.

Between now and the Convention, the Party carrying out the positive direction of the NEC, will have the opportunity of putting its own house in order, and clarifying to its membership the day-to-day meaning of these NEC decisions. It will have the opportunity of coming to a Convention knowing in advance what problems it has to face, and thereby having the chance of coming out of the convention a disciplined national party of struggle, whose principles are based on a tested fund of Marxist doctrine and a party capable of swinging its ranks into action as a vanguard of an awakening working class within America.

This issue combines the numbers for November and December. The dating and numbering must conform to post-office regulations.

The Election of 1936 and the Prospects of a Farmer-Labor Party

Norman Thomas

IT is not necessary to take up much time or space with a discussion of the Presidential campaign of 1936 and its results. In no vital respects did it differ from what I had expected. The Roosevelt landslide was a little larger, and the vote for minority candidates—myself included—considerably smaller than I had expected. Mr. Roosevelt in his campaign committed himself explicitly on none of the burning issues which must occupy his and the country's attention in the next four years. He goes into office without specific mandate. He is probably as much to be trusted with such a blank check as any candidate of a capitalist party. Nevertheless, there was about the election the somewhat disquieting aspect of the choice of "the leader" rather than a decision on issues. It is, of course, inconceivable that the President can hold together the particular following which put him in office without sharp division. For instance, when the New York electoral college meets, David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, head of the committee for raising funds for the Spanish Loyalists, will sit down beside former Ambassador Gerard, a blatant advocate of brutal Spanish fascism. America is not so remote from the rest of the world, nor is our American politics so different from world politics that this unnatural alliance behind one man and within one party can be indefinitely continued without serious friction.

It was easy enough to show logically during the campaign how vulnerable was Roosevelt's record as a friend of labor, especially when one considers the South. Nevertheless there can be no doubt that to the mass of people it did seem more than almost ever before that there was a real difference between the Republican and Democratic parties and their respective leaders. There was immense and conscious mass support for Roosevelt as the champion of the common people. Among the "common people," to use Lincoln's phrase, are, of course, the forces of organized labor which were more articulate and better organized in this campaign than previously. Nevertheless, so far as class interest expressed itself, it was little men against big rather than workers against an owning class in a Marxist sense. Much has been made of the fact that it took some courage for the masses to vote against powerful interests. There is truth in that statement, but it is a truth that is considerably exaggerated. It must be remembered that in 1936, unlike 1896, there was a powerful government already in office which sought the suffrage of the masses, and Republican pressure was largely offset by the pressure of the government through its control of relief, the election machinery, etc.

One encouraging feature of the election was the deflation of the Lemke-Coughlin boom. It is possible also to exaggerate the significance of that event.

My own belief is that if Coughlin keeps his health he will probably stage something of a comeback; and, in any case, under conditions of depression instead of conditions of temporary recovery, we shall have a new Messiah or a new crop of Messiahs. Besides the actual deflation of Lemke there were other factors to account for the smallness of his vote—the Administration's skillful use of relief, for instance, in states where Lemke had potential strength, and the general feeling of the public that to take a chance on a third party was to risk one's vote. (This latter feeling is far more significant for the future of a farmer-labor party than some of its enthusiastic advocates imagine.)

There were some two or three hundred thousand fewer convinced socialists than I had thought. I had only expected to get a pretty straight socialist vote under the conditions that prevailed this year. Nevertheless I come through the campaign with a considerable feeling of satisfaction concerning the Party. It did gallant work. It stood for principles. It helped to educate for Socialism. It is far less compromised than the communists whose equivocal position of indirect support for Roosevelt whom they had so bitterly denounced only a few months before, unquestionably weakened the party and its cause.

We socialists could never have taken the communist line without suffering even more than they did in prestige and in the size of the vote. They have a different type of organization and they have Moscow to fall back upon, and that is no inconsiderable asset in more than one respect. For us this year not to have run a candidate would have been to miss an important opportunity to insist that the issue was Socialism vs. capitalism; not a vague bourgeois democracy against an inaccurately defined fascism. Given our history and present condition it would also have been an act of collective suicide. Conceivably it may be possible so to organize the American Socialist Party that under certain circumstances it can live and thrive even without nominating a Presidential candidate. 1936 was not a year in which that was true.

To return now to the future. In many sections of the labor movement, especially the organized labor movement, there is a decided and encouraging interest in the formation of a farmer-labor party. In Wisconsin the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation which is in the Progressive Party consolidated its position. Undoubtedly it will try to control the Progressive Party and extend the farmer-labor party principle. The Farmer-Labor party was successful in Minnesota although by means of an alliance with democrats blessed by President Roosevelt. In New York the American Labor Party is definitely a factor to be reckoned with. Under the circumstances its success was by no means extraordinary. It got altogether considerably under 300,000 votes in New York State. It must be remembered that all that was asked of the workers was to vote under a different emblem for candidates for whom they would have voted anyhow. The American Labor Party had no independent candidates. In some unions and in some cities a rather coercive pressure was put upon the workers by the unions in its behalf. Some of the party funds were raised by a kind of check-off system. The party itself and the unions comprising it must have spent rather more or less than a dollar for each vote they got. Outside of New York City and Monroe County, of which Rochester is the county seat, we social-

ists either held our own with the American Labor Party or decidedly passed it in the vote.

As I write it is announced that the party is to continue virtually as a coalition of labor unions. It has no farmer strength at all and it is very bureaucratically organized. It has definitely rejected the principle of federation and expects to require that all its members renounce membership in any other party. How this bureaucratic organization will work, what antagonisms it will create, how it can maintain itself under the primary laws once it becomes subject to them—these are questions which are by no means determined by anything which has yet happened. It is enough for this present article to state that while the A.L.P. is a factor with which we must reckon it is not a model for the national organization of a party, nor is it conceivable that a successful party can be born and maintained under the bureaucratic control of a few labor unions. Important as is the support of organized labor for a farmer-labor party, it must be remembered that the functions of a labor party and of unions are different and both the unions and a labor party will suffer if the latter is to be regarded as merely a labor union activity controlled by its bureaucracy.

Besides the rather sizable parties which I have mentioned, there are many smaller organizations, municipal, county, or state, and there is talk of more. They will be of all sorts, and of all degrees of sincerity and power. They must be reckoned with. At the worst, they represent a decided advance of the workers in consciousness of their own solidarity and of their own collective interests.

Socialists generally welcome this advance, as indeed they should. The party has been committed ever since 1921 to the principle of a farmer-labor party. It is an appropriate expression of the political interests of the workers, a definite stage in their development. It offers a mass basis for action. It is a very fertile field for socialist educational work. It is probably better that a mass party should be a farmer-labor party rather than that the Socialist Party under the impact of a mass movement should be swamped by sheer force of numbers of well meaning workers not yet grounded in the principles of Socialism. The Socialist Party may be most useful when it can serve as a kind of vanguard and exercise its influence as such in mass organizations, which include not only a farmer-labor party, but the unions, consumers' cooperatives, and the more important civic organizations.

If, to say the least it is doubtful, there lie ahead in America several years unmarked by sharp crisis, it is possible that the farmer labor-party may have a development analagous to certain European labor parties and achieve some things of value in themselves. If crisis comes before such a party can be effectively organized, the effort to organize it will not have been wholly in vain, and may help to some degree to prepare the workers for action appropriate to the revolutionary conditions which crisis may bring.

In no sense can a farmer-labor party take the place of a Socialist Party. This I insisted during the campaign; this I have repeatedly insisted in everything I have written and said since the campaign. The position has been admirably stated in the resolution of the National Executive Committee. Socialism is the hope of the world, and Socialism requires socialist organization; in other words, the Socialist Party to advance it.

Everything in the logic of the socialist analysis of capitalism; everything in the history of Europe since the World War, proves that no defensive battle against dark reaction, fascism and a new cycle of wars can long be successfully waged. We must choose between the totalitarian state of fascism, or the cooperative commonwealth of Socialism. Fascism itself is not so much a conspiracy of wicked men as a stage of capitalist-nationalist development. The issue of democracy vs. fascism was to a large extent unreal in the campaign of 1936, and even where such an issue has more reality it is a dangerous substitute for Socialism vs. capitalism. It is the development of bourgeois democracy under capitalism which has given rise to fascism, and simply to save bourgeois democracy is not an ideal which can long withstand the onset of fascism. The struggle to preserve bourgeois democracy at best can only be temporary, while we organize our forces to press on toward a federation of cooperative commonwealths. It is a tragedy to find men who once condemned the German Social-Democrats who now seem to believe that *all* that is necessary in America is a farmer-labor party which must inevitably start behind the German Social-Democrats in class solidarity, in philosophy and program.

So far I have been assuming that the interest in a farmer-labor party will mean that in the near future it will be formed probably on a nationwide scale by a kind of coalition of groups and forces. This assumption is incorrect, at least if one means by it that a national farmer-labor party is practically inevitable. On the contrary, the task of building it will be exceedingly difficult. The probabilities are about as follows: There will be a lot of farmer-labor parties differing in structure, in understanding, and in success. There will be much talk, and perhaps a little action, toward building a national farmer-labor party. Strong and ambitious labor leaders, and probably ambitious politicians, will use the idea for purposes of political maneuver. Mr. Roosevelt himself may seem to smile a little upon it for reasons of his own. But, as American political history shows, the people are strongly wedded to the two party idea.

Assuming that there is no crisis of war or economic depression between now and 1940—an assumption which is dubious—the chances are that the same considerations which made the electorate overwhelmingly back Roosevelt in 1936 will incline it to back Roosevelt's successor in the Democratic Party in 1940. This I say despite the fact that inevitably there will be cleavages in the Roosevelt support and much discontent with his failure to fulfill the exaggerated expectations of labor. There is little chance that the Republicans will change their spots. They will be again in some form or other peculiarly the party of the business interests. The argument will run: "Unsatisfactory as much of the Democratic record has been, we cannot afford to take a chance on the victory of reaction." This argument will be particularly forceful if, as is quite probable, Roosevelt's successor has his blessing and is as liberal as he is. A man like Governor Earle of Pennsylvania is at present rather more liberal in action than President Roosevelt. At the last moment some of the labor and farm leaders who have been playing with the idea of a national farmer-labor party are likely to sell those budding organizations down the river, not necessarily for corrupt reasons or for personal reasons, though that may enter in, but

rather because of their fear of a reactionary victory or because of certain definite inducements offered by the Democratic Party to the farmers and workers.

This is made the more likely by the nature of the communist agitation for a popular front or a People's Party. If all the communists want is a popular front, it is rather ridiculous to take the danger and risk of forming a farmer-labor party when the Democratic Party, with the important exception of the solid South, so nearly approximates it now. Indeed it is so regarded by many Europeans.

The strength of these considerations is enhanced by certain constitutional and legal provisions, the effects of which have scarcely been considered by the more enthusiastic advocates of the farmer-labor party. Everybody knows that the President and Vice-President of the United States are not elected by direct vote of the people, but rather must be chosen by a majority of the electoral college. It is easily possible to have a majority of the electoral college and yet be in a decided minority on the popular vote. That has happened in American history; it could happen again. Moreover, it is possible that a fairly strong third party would so divide the vote in the electoral college that no candidate would get a majority, in which case the election would be thrown into the House of Representatives where each state—New York and Nevada—has one vote. The danger of this situation can scarcely be exaggerated. Inevitably it militates against the success of any third party, even of the Messianic or semi-fascist sort which may compete with a farmer-labor party or popular front.

Nor is that all. The election of President, Vice-President, and of Congressmen today is controlled by state laws, and there are forty-eight states and forty-eight state laws concerning primaries and elections. Each year makes it more difficult for a new party to get on the ballot. I have not space in this article to summarize the evidence. Suffice it to say that of the three national campaigns which I have waged, this was by far the hardest for the Socialist Party to get on the ballot. This is the first year in which almost uniformly write-in votes were completely thrown out in states which had no provision for getting on the ballot otherwise. The Florida law is so extreme that if it is to be kept in force the Republican Party is off the ballot. Only the Democratic Party is legal and we have the first totalitarian state!

Advocates of a farmer-labor party have got to stop shouting for it long enough to consider this situation. Obviously the success of a farmer-labor movement as well as any vindication of democracy requires a constitutional amendment, the first feature of which ought to be direct election of the President and Vice-President. That is not enough. The amendment should give definite control over the election of Federal officials to the national government so that it will be impossible for states to disfranchise citizens by ballot laws of various sorts. Along with the struggle for this constitutional amendment should also go a struggle in the states to make it possible for minority parties to get on the ballot on reasonable terms and to remove the various discriminations, racial and otherwise, which now make our political democracy so hypocritical.

Purely aside from these legal difficulties which if not removed are likely to block the organization of a farmer-labor party, is the psychological addiction of the American people to the two party

system, and their fear of throwing away their vote. A very definite educational campaign is going to be necessary to deal with this. Moreover, no such campaign can succeed simply in terms of instrumentalism; that is to say, of the notion that all we need is *a* farmer-labor party. On the contrary, what we need above all is to give the people of America, the workers with hand and brain, a vision of the world they might have and an understanding of how to get it. *A* farmer-labor party might easily be merely a vehicle for trade union capitalism, or for political maneuvering by ambitions politicians within and without the labor movement. If, as I have already said, such a party must start behind rather than ahead of the German Social-Democrats or the British Labor Party, it becomes imperatively necessary to insist that its success depends upon a leadership that will advance it rapidly beyond the position taken by those parties. Not only does that require definite socialist organization. It also requires continual emphasis upon socialist principles and upon a concrete analysis and program applicable to the situation which labor must meet. The advocates of a farmer-labor party will have to concern themselves not only with the constitutional issue, but with problems of war and peace, civil liberty, unemployment, social security, and the like far more vigorously and intelligently than henceforth has been the case. Moreover, in America more than in almost any industrial nation in the world, farmers are powerful and from the beginning must be included in organization and in program, or else they will become the raw material for fascism or reaction.

I am approaching the limits that must be set upon this article. There is not space within it to discuss in detail socialist strategy with regard to a farmer-labor party. Progress was made in dealing with that by the N.E.C. and some definite conclusions will have to be reached by our special convention. The essential conditions of such a party are definite loyalty to Socialism and a party so well organized that it can permit a certain flexibility to meet local requirements. Our first job is to build this type of a party, and in building it we cannot afford to forget that this is not 1900, and that we cannot reasonably expect a decade or so unmarked by sharp crisis. Everything we do must be derived from our conviction that Socialism and only Socialism is the hope of the world.

RENEW YOUR "SUB"!
GIVE THE ASM AS A GIFT!

Some Notes on An All-Inclusive Party

Haim Kantorovitch

ON the eve of the Detroit Convention, May, 1934, the most widely discussed problem in the Socialist Party was "The Road to Power." Whoever could hold pen in hand, wrote articles, theses, or resolutions on "The Road to Power." In branches, the heated discussions on the "Road to Power" were never ending.

Of course many naive, foolish, and often utopian plans were proposed. Some of the endless discussions consisted of "hot air," etc. Yet, there was a healthy element in all of these discussions. Socialists wanted to make their own ideas clear to themselves. They wanted to know for themselves: How are we going to attain power? A socialist who takes his Socialism seriously must have an answer to this question. It is true, no blue print of the future revolution can be made, but the question does not demand a blue print for an answer. What is necessary in order to answer the question, is merely to rephrase it. Instead of asking how we are going to answer it, we should ask:—In view of past experiences, and in view of the tendencies of capitalist development, what will we, in all probability, be compelled to do in order to achieve Socialism?

Those socialists,—and their number in the Socialist Party is considerable,—who consider themselves very practical and advise us to "first build a Socialist Party, and then speculate on the future;" those who tell us "we will cross the bridge when we reach it" are really very impractical. Imagine some one consulting an architect and ordering him to build a house. "What kind of house?" the architect asks. "Never mind. That is a question for the future. You just build the house. Later we will decide such details as kind, size, material, plan, etc." People would think such a man crazy. But that is exactly what our practical people advise us to do. First build a Socialist Party, and later you will decide the kind of party. The question of what kind of a party depends on what we expect it to accomplish and how. If, for instance, we believe that Socialism will come as a result of a gradual, peaceful, quantitative accumulation of social reforms, we will have one type of Socialist Party, a type in which there is ample place for every soft-hearted liberal, reformer, pacifist, even though he is not a socialist. Any one who subscribes to the immediate demands we put forward today is welcome. Let's get this support. Tomorrow he may not agree with our tomorrow's immediate demands and leave the party. But what of it. There will always be other good people who will join us in our fight for a constitutional amendment, or unemployment insurance, or other such reforms. That these people are not socialists is of no consequence so long as they help us increase the volume of accomplished reforms, because volume is everything. When "quantity" will reach sufficient *volume*

of development, it will turn into a new quality without our doing anything about it.

If, however, we believe that Socialism can come only as a result of a revolution, we will have a different type of party. We will have to organize a party that will prepare for a revolution. Good people who are ready to support our fight for a constitutional amendment, will still be welcome to do so, but there will be no place for them in the party. A reformist party can, and should, be an all-inclusive party. There is no reason to reject one from party membership merely because he does not share our "dream of the future" so long as he accepts and is willing to fight for our demands of today.

The slogan "all-inclusive" party is, of course, no invention of Comrade Thomas'. Every Socialist Party in Europe, as well as the American Socialist Party, prior to the war and the Russian revolution were all-inclusive. There was room enough in the German Social-Democratic Party for both Rosa Luxemburg and Eduard Bernstein; in the French party for Jules Guesde as well as Renaudel; for Bill Haywood and Victor Berger in the American party.

The legend is diligently spread that the Russian Bolshevik Party was a united, monolithic party. But it is not true. Philsophic revisionism of Marxism first sprang up among the Bolsheviki. Machism, which Lenin considered reactionary and counter-revolutionary, was for a time practically limited to the Bolshevik circles. The foremost representatives of Machism, Bogdanov, Lunacharsky, Bazarov, were all active members of the Bolshevik party. Lenin knew well that philosophic revisionism could not stop at philosophy, that it was bound to lead to revisionist practice. Knowing full well that he was incompetent in matters of philosophy, he appealed to his political enemies, but still his philosophic teachers, Plekhanov and "Orthodox" (Luba Axelrod) that they undertake a fundamental criticism of the new revisionism. Only after they had refused did he decide to do the job himself. Because of his incompetency in philosophy, he produced a very inferior book on philosophy. Little did he dream that his inferior creation would become the Koran of the communist philosophy and effectively block the way for all future philosophic developments within the communist movement.

This, however, is a digression. What is important is the fact that the Bolshevik party, before the October Revolution was far from the united, monolithic party it is said to have been. Just before the outbreak of the war, the tendency grew very strong among both Bolsheviki and Mensheviki to unite into one party. If not for the outbreak of the war, this union would certainly have been accomplished. Even after the first revolution (1917) Stalin and other Bolshevik leaders were for uniting with the Mensheviki.

But, what happened to these all-inclusive parties? They all split, broke up into more than two parts as soon as they faced the first crisis. An all-inclusive party can exist only during times of peace and prosperity. Noske and Rosa Luxemburg could belong to the same party so long as all real problems that divided them were *Zukunftsmusik*. But, once the future became the present, as it is bound to become sometime, the constituent elements of the inclusive party had to part company. Yesterday's friends became today's enemies, and were often compelled to settle their differences behind opposing sides of

barricades. This is the fate of every inclusive party. It can not survive a crisis.

The value of a Socialist Party for the social reformer is in what it can achieve today. For the revolutionary socialist its value is determined by what it is destined to achieve tomorrow. Hoping to achieve its ideal within the framework of existing social and political institutions it is natural for social reformists to declare that "the Socialist Party firmly believes in the strengthening and maintainance of existing democratic institutions" (quoted from the resolution on armed insurrection adopted by the Cleveland Convention of the Socialist Party). Revolutionary socialists do not share this view. They believe that in order to achieve Socialism they will have to destroy and replace the existing democratic institutions. They are therefore not interested in maintaining and strengthening, but in showing up these institutions for what they are: Tools of capitalism, maintained by capitalism for its own purposes, and as future weapons to be used against the victorious revolutionary armies.

Only fools and charlatans will read into this a repetition of the now discarded Stalinist theory that between bourgeois democracy and fascism we have nothing to choose. Of course, every revolutionary socialist is ready to defend the existing democratic institutions against fascism. Yet, it is not the same as an abstract and general pledge to maintain and strengthen existing democratic institutions. A general declaration like the one quoted from the Cleveland resolution is a blanket endorsement of the existing democratic institutions. We will maintain and strengthen them because they are good per se.* The revolutionary socialist is ready to defend bourgeois democracy not because it is good per se, but because he does not want to exchange it for a fascist dictatorship. He wants to exchange it for a workers' democracy.

To the advice of the practical people: First build a party and then discuss plans for the future, — there is one answer. We cannot build a party before we decide on the type of party we want. And we cannot decide on the type of party we want unless we know what we expect the party to accomplish and how we believe it may accomplish it. In other words, theoretic and programmatic clarity must come first. This is both the foundation and cement of the party.

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*Of course, this contradicts the part added to the Detroit Declaration according to which no real democracy is possible in a class society.

These notes were the beginning of an unfinished article on an All-Inclusive Party.

Spain: New Outpost of World Revolution

Ernest Erber

"IT'S us or Franco now. Spain will never have a republic. The liberals were too timid and the reactionaries too obstinate to make the republic possible in the past. Now it is too late. The masses will never go back to the old conditions."

Thus did a young Spanish intellectual, a doctor of medicine, sum up his reasons for leaving the "Esquerra" and joining the anarchist youth. He had not yet accepted a complete anarchist outlook and one could even notice a trace of regret when he spoke about the impossibility of achieving a democratic Spain. Yet he knew and had perfectly described the alternatives before Spain, "us or Franco," a workers' regime or fascism.

Revolutionary socialists have never tired of pointing out that "us or Franco" are the only alternatives, not only for Spain, but for the entire world. We said that the outbreak of the World War had signalized the high point of capitalist development and that the post-war collapse was the cue for the working class to appear on the stage of history and play its role as gravediggers of the old society and builders of the new.

Here in America we correctly posed the question of "Socialism or capitalism" in the recent election campaign. We, of course, realized that it was a propaganda slogan to train and prepare the American working class for struggles that lie ahead to settle this decisive question of our age. *In Spain the slogan of "capitalism or Socialism" means more than a propaganda slogan. To the Spanish masses it means life or death, freedom of Socialism, or fascist oppression.*

Yet, these alternatives for Spain are not as simple as they appear. The Spanish situation is complicated by many factors. Most of these can only be understood when one realizes that historical development follows no mathematical formula. Capitalism develops both on the basis of specific national economics and also internationally. One affects and influences the other. Its development is both uneven, in that different nations develop at varying tempos and through differing national forms, and combined, in that world capitalism reacts upon its specific national sections and forces them into a uniform course of evolution.

This combined and uneven development of capitalism has made Spain the country of contradictions. The bourgeois revolution against the remnants of feudalism was never completed, and yet the bourgeoisie has gone over to fascism and aligned itself with the dregs of the dark ages against the harbingers of the new society. Modern mass industry exists side by side with virtually feudal relations in a large section of agriculture. Feudal reaction was making its last stand and already a militant proletariat was pressing for a revolutionary solution of social and political questions.

It was only natural that an unprecedented course should be taken by the class struggle in Spain. No "Marxist" blueprint drawn by those who think

revolution is a mechanical process called for the course of events that resulted in the situation we see today. It resulted from the attempts of one section of the bourgeoisie to increase its political power against feudal reaction (represented by the army, the church and the big landowners) by leaning upon a proletariat that refused to limit itself to a struggle for political democracy and forged ahead to make deep inroads upon capitalist control of industry, and the realization by another section of the bourgeoisie that a fight against feudalism would lead to a proletarian revolution and that a bloc with feudal reaction was necessary to save Spanish capitalism. The bourgeoisie, therefore, split into a democratic and a fascist section.

The democratic section of the bourgeoisie was mostly composed of the bourgeoisie of Catalonia and the Biscay, who wanted autonomy and opposed *any* kind of a strong central government, and the petty bourgeoisie. Even in Catalonia and the Biscay, the industrial sections of Spain, the majority of the big bourgeoisie went over to fascism despite their fears of a central government, when the offensive of the masses following the election victory of the left bloc proved that the masses were determined to wipe out fascism by wiping out capitalism.

The parliamentary control of the state was secured by the democratic bourgeoisie through a bloc with the working class. It could not afford to turn too sharply against the masses that put it into power unless it was prepared to conclude an alliance with the right. As a result it could not curb the attacks of the masses against the most reactionary section of their class enemy. The masses took the offensive with attacks upon fascist and monarchist political headquarters and meetings, burning of churches, seizures of land, and strikes in industry for higher wages.

The right bloc knew that a continuation of the situation that existed after the spring elections would smash its power and result in a proletarian revolution. It therefore prepared the fascist putsch which was to establish its dictatorship. This resulted in the unprecedented situation of an insurrection against the constituted bourgeois state from the right. The civil war that resulted posed this question before the working class, *"Should the working class further its revolutionary offensive and establish its state power in the course of the struggle against reaction or should they call a moratorium on the socialist revolution and only defend the republic?"*

Certainly if this epoch of world history places the question of Socialism or fascism on the order of the day, and certainly if every phase of the Spanish situation poses these alternatives in all their nakedness, the Spanish working class had only one choice, the military struggle at the front against fascism, and the political revolution behind the lines. More than that, the military struggle at the front itself demanded a central government that ruled with the iron hand of war-time necessity and the organization of a real army with discipline from the top. It could only be the strong government of the republic with the aim of defending democracy and a bourgeois army, or a workers' government with the aim of Socialism and a Red Army. History gives us the example of the Jacobins in the French Revolution who fought at the front and conquered exactly because they did not retreat in the political struggle behind the lines.

Yet the decisive sections of the work-

ing class leadership did not consolidate the power that lay in their hands into a workers' government. One finds the reason in the following:

1. The left wing of the Socialist Party, headed by Caballero and the strongest force in the working class, feared that a socialist Spain would be isolated as Russia was in 1917-21 and the combined forces of the German-Italian bloc, England and even France would be arrayed against it. With the situation in the official international labor movement as it is now, no aid could be expected from it. Out of these considerations, and in the hope of aid from France and the Soviet Union, the left socialists removed their slogan of "the dictatorship of the proletariat" from the masthead of their paper and came out for the defense of the republic.

2. The Communist Party in Spain, as elsewhere, followed a line dictated by the needs of Soviet foreign policy. If the victory of fascism would upset the European status quo, then the victory of a socialist revolution would definitely shatter it. Its repercussions would start a new revolutionary wave in France and Belgium and roll on. Hence the impossible must be achieved. Fascism must be stopped, but the masses must be restrained from setting up a workers' government. The communists have, as a result, become more republican in their policies than the republican bourgeoisie.

3. The anarchists have found that the demands of the practical situation cannot be met on the basis of anarchist theory. They have consequently, by progressive stages, thrown theory overboard and proceeded pragmatically from problem to problem. They have always been bitterly hostile to the idea of a workers' state. The needs of the hour have reconciled them to the idea of working with the bourgeois state. They feel that a workers' state will mean a new form of oppression that will last for a long period. They hope to get rid of the bourgeois state after the military struggle has been won. Hence they prefer to tolerate it now rather than displace it with the workers' government that would be necessary to continue the war.

In addition to these reasons, the anarchists are also motivated by the fears of isolation by the imperialist powers. The military lessons of the war, particularly the need of supplies from abroad, have heightened this fear.

The Russian workers had only one ally during the period of blockade and intervention, the international working class. The Bolsheviks never regarded their revolution as an isolated phenomenon. They looked upon it as a section, as the outpost, of the world revolution. As a result they found that their best defense was spreading the revolution throughout the world. It was only because they counted upon the international working class that they dared take power in October. The post-war revolutionary wave, for which the impetus was given by the Russian Revolution, again and again smashed the attempts of the imperialists to organize intervention.

The Spanish revolution is taking place after 19 years of existence of a workers' state covering one-sixth of the earth. The Spanish workers should have much less fear of isolation and destruction by imperialism than the Bolsheviks had. *Yet the knowledge that they could not rely upon the support of the Soviet Union was the largest single factor in keeping the left socialists from pressing on for a workers' government.*

The second largest factor was the sorry spectacle the international labor

movement presents today. In virtually every important country, the labor movement is so tied to its government that it cannot act independently. In France, the country in which the workers are in a position to render most aid, both material and political, the existence of the People's Front government ties the working class hand and foot. Blum, taking responsibility for the capitalist state, must carry out the foreign policy of French imperialism. French diplomacy demanded neutrality in the Spanish events. The presence of the Socialist Party in the government tied neutrality to the French labor movement as the ball to the leg of the prisoner. Thus, the French labor movement is neutral, while their Spanish comrades lay down their lives on battlefields, where the fate of the European working class is being decided.

The actions of the Soviet Union and the international labor movement are still worse when contrasted to the brazen and decisive policy pursued by Hitler and Mussolini. They realized the international character of the struggle and acted to help their side. They took full advantage of the neutrality attempts of Blum and the Soviet Union and the results are apparent in the Spanish military situation.

The continually worsening diplomatic position of the Soviet Union as a result of maneuvering instead of presenting a firm front has led it to take steps to aid Spain. The desperate situation of Madrid has frightened the Soviet Union into acting. What is still more important, every arrival of aid from the Soviet Union increases the prestige and support of the Spanish Communist Party and makes the Caballero government more dependent upon it. The greater the power of the Soviet Union and the Comintern in Spain, the better the chances of controlling the masses and restraining their desires for a Socialist Spain.

The acts of the Soviet Union leave only one ally for the Spanish working class, the ally of the Russian working class in 1917-21, the international working class. If the workers of the world mobilize their forces and give both material aid and political support to their Spanish comrades, the tide will turn, both in Spain and the world. Material aid means guns, ammunition, and other supplies independently gathered by the workers' organizations and sent to Spain. Political support means fighting every law that restricts the Spanish government from buying arms and independent strike actions to prevent shipment of supplies to the fascists.

If such aid is effectively rendered, and a resolute drive for a socialist Spain by the Spanish working class would inspire the workers of the world to such action, the Spanish working class can both take and hold power, smash the fascist armies, and begin a new period of proletarian revolution.

SEND A "SUB" AS A GIFT.

Blind Alley in Tampa:

The A. F. of L. Convention

Sam Baron

THE third act of the drama that is being unfolded in the A. F. of L. has yet to be presented. Tampa was not the third act, but a dress rehearsal where lines were being tried out, and where the actors were coached by Messrs. Hutcheson, Woll and Frey.

Before reviewing the Tampa Convention, the prologue and previous acts in San Francisco and Atlantic City should be related.

Some thirty-five million unorganized workers are the silent audience—many of them had been organized at various times, only to give up in disgust. Their immediate economic interests were buried in wranglings over jurisdictions by craft unions. New unions fought for a foothold only to find that after going through the struggle of winning strikes and building their organizations without the help of the craft unions, these craft unions would swoop down and tear them apart on the pretext of jurisdictional claims, leaving them impotent and discouraged.

There is no doubt that the average unorganized worker prefers the industrial type of union. He realizes the elementary fact that his chances of getting a fair return for his labor are enhanced if every worker in his plant is in one organization and not spread over twenty or thirty unions, as is often the case. But here is where the rub comes in. The craftists, when granted charters years ago, were given jurisdiction over all workers working at that trade. Time and bitter experience have proven that the Craft Unions cannot organize the mass production industries on craft lines. In the first place, the "crafts" in these industries constitute only a small percentage of the men employed. Second, it is impossible to determine in what crafts many of the men belong, as modern industry is highly mechanized. Third, the initiation fees, dues and assessments of the craft unions are prohibitive. For these and many more reasons the A. F. of L. has dismally failed to organize the mass production industries.

Without considering local unions that were absorbed by National and International Unions the organizing record of the A. F. of L. for the year ending October 1935 was, according to the Executive Council's report, page 28: 272 new unions against 586 unions that had died in the same period, a net loss of 314 unions. That is the accomplishment of 1,650 organizers on the payroll of the A. F. of L.

The increased number of Company and Independent Unions, significantly enough organized on an industrial basis, revealed the temper and mind of average workmen. The concentrated onslaught by the open shop Industrialists through their Manufacturers Associations, Chambers of Commerce, subsidized sections of the American Legion, The National Civic Federation, the Ku Klux Klan, The Black Legion, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Hearst Press, the use of spies, thugs, strikebreakers, the purchase of vast quantities of mu-

nitions by the Industrialists, brought home to the progressives in the A. F. of L. the conclusion that the unorganized must be organized if the labor movement was to withstand powerful frontal blows from these forces of reaction.

The Craft Unionists, typically short-sighted, were concerned only with protecting their vested interests, and used the A. F. of L. for that purpose. Although professing a desire to see the mass production industries organized, they would not "sacrifice" their paper jurisdiction to enhance a successful campaign in these industries. Faced with the dogmatic, selfish attitude of the craftists, the forward-looking progressives took steps to push the A. F. of L. leadership into an effective campaign. This was the prologue as the A. F. of L. convened in San Francisco.

The first act curtain rose on a scene which gave hope that, at last, a way had been found effectively to organize the mass production industries. One year passed. The curtain rose on the second act in Atlantic City. It was soon clear to all that, whatever had been the understanding in San Francisco, the craftist dominated Executive Council had not changed its approach one whit. The Radio, Automobile, Rubber unions were not given unrestricted charters which would give them jurisdiction over all workers working in and around the plants in their respective industries. The Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union was to find out that, despite the Industrial Charter granted them many years ago, a successful raid was to be staged at this convention by the machinists and other craft unions.

John L. Lewis, leader of the United Mine Workers and of the forces for industrial unionism, gave notice to the craft union leadership of the A. F. of L.: "So we find that the San Francisco convention policy has not been administered by the Executive of the American Federation of Labor. We find that Chairman Woll, of this committee, mildly lectures Delegate Lewis and quotes at length from a speech made in San Francisco, asking the convention to accept the report of the committee on the ground that Delegate Lewis, now, after a lapse of one year, is not satisfied with the San Francisco action.

"Well, a year ago at San Francisco I was a year younger, and naturally I had more faith in the Executive Council. I was beguiled into believing that an enlarged Executive Council would honestly interpret and administer this policy—the policy we talked about for six days in committee, the policy of issuing charters for industrial unions in the mass production industries. But surely Delegate Woll would not hold it against me that I was so trusting at that time. I know better now. At San Francisco they seduced me with fair words. Now, of course, having learned that I was seduced, I am enraged and I am ready to rend my seducers limb from limb, including Delegate Woll. In that sense, of course, I speak figuratively. At San Francisco, as I say, I was younger and more gullible, and I did not realize how much influence the National Civic Federation had with the American Federation of Labor Executive Council—but I know now—perhaps not so much now, since the National Civic Federation is without a president, so I am informed."

And so the stage presented a figure who had the ability to consolidate the progressives in the A. F. of L. for a drive to force the organization of the unorganized, impressing that fact upon the entire convention, especially upon William L. Hutcheson of the Carpenters.

After the Atlantic City convention the Committee for Industrial Organization was formed, comprising the I.L.G.W.U., the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the International Typographical Union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, the United Textile Workers, the Automobile Workers, Rubber Workers, Glass Workers, Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers and the United Mine Workers of America. These unions have a membership of approximately 1,200,000. In a panic the Executive Council took extreme measures against this group by suspending them from membership in the A. F. of L. Not having the constitutional power for such suspensions, the Executive Council usurped power at a previous meeting of the Council.

With the representatives of over one million workers absent, deprived of voice and vote by the suspensions, the 56th annual convention of the American Federation of Labor opened in Tampa.

The curtain rose on a stage completely dominated by the craft leadership. Organized labor and the entire world was presented with the complete bankruptcy of this leadership. The American Federation reached a new low in the promulgation of policy at this convention.

The convention of labor listened to the vapid mouthings of the leader of the American Legion, but failed to hear the representatives of Spanish labor, fighting for their lives against the forces of reaction. Green, Woll and Company preferred to mollify the Catholic delegates, rather than do their obvious duty to the cause of international labor. Although at different times during the convention both Ambassador De Los Rios and Spain's Ambassador to Sweden, Isabella Palencia, were in town, no invitation was forthcoming from William Green. Several hundred delegates signed a petition urging Green to grant the invitation, only to have Green wail that the delegates were embarrassing him.

The rumor that the craft leadership was planning to raise the Jewish question as a tactic to drive a wedge into the ranks of the C. I. O. became a fact when the Resolutions Committee, reporting on the C. I. O., addressed itself to "the organizations composed largely of Jewish workers" and advised these workers to "think it over in their hearts and in their homes." The Resolutions Committee found it was holding a hot coal as Max Zaritzky of the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers Union minced no words in characterizing this contemptible maneuver. . . . "And you had to go out of your way to bring shame, at least upon my head, not as a Jew, but as a member of the American labor movement. I protest with every fibre of my being against the injection of the Jewish question or of any other racial or national question in the Council of the American labor movement, and I hope that this part of the report, that this remark by the committee, will receive some action of this convention. I do not like and do not care to use any stronger term—I regret it, gentlemen of the committee." John P. Frey, for the committee, dropped the hot coal by withdrawing the paragraph in question.

The same Resolutions Committee issued its annual tirade against Communism. But that was to be expected, as delegates wanting to get any expression on fascism from the A. F. of L. have resigned themselves to the fact that the Committee would use that occasion, also, as a basis for an attack on Communism. This abject resignation was very sur-

prising to observers. There wasn't even a semblance of protest from our comrades to the "left."

The illegal action of the Executive Council in suspending over 1,000,000 members of the A. F. of L. under a rule adopted by the Executive Council in a previous session was sustained by the convention. In addition, the Council was vested with more power than it had ever had in its entire history. The C. I. O. forces feel that these new powers make it more difficult to find a basis for unity. Any unity with the craft-dominated executive council holding autocratic power that can be used against them in the future would be dangerous. The power to suspend unions can be a club over the heads of the opposition to the present rulers of the A. F. of L.

The autonomy of the Central Labor Unions was severely curbed by withdrawing their right to declare a boycott against unfair employers. The procedure set up by the convention makes it virtually impossible, according to the progressive forces in the convention, to declare a boycott in time to make it effective.

The Federal Local Unions, which furnish fifty percent of the Federation's income were punished for their support of industrial unionism. From now on all resolutions coming from these bodies must first go through the Executive Council thirty days previous to the convention and the Council will decide whether these resolutions shall be submitted to the convention. Hitherto, the Federal Locals had equal rights with the National Unions, which permitted them until the second day of the convention to submit their resolutions.

On the resolutions dealing with William R. Hearst the Resolutions Committee found the opportunity to present Hearst as a labor-loving employer by pointing to his relations with various unions. No matter what one thinks of the merits of a boycott against a newspaper, progressive delegates felt that the A. F. of L. went out of its way to make Hearst respectable from labor's viewpoint.

The reactionary climax came when the craftists stuck a knife in the heart of the Seamen's strike by condemning it as "outlaw" and supporting the officials of the International Seamen's Union. The ideology of the National Civic Federation had a complete field day.

To attempt a complete analysis of the future of the labor movement is a difficult matter. However, this much is clear—if the craft unions have their way the A. F. of L. will remain, at best, an organization that will be used by the leadership to advance its personal interests without consideration for the minority and the unorganized. The A. F. of L. will remain a cold, hard, conservative and at times reactionary organization, completely oblivious to the fact that the workers of this country have mutual interests with workers of other countries and that the struggle of one is the struggle of the others. The A. F. of L. will not be a force politically, since the traditional policy of punishing its enemies and rewarding its friends will prevail. Independent political action by labor will be set back for years to come.

Under it present leadership, the A. F. of L. will never be a force to enable it to resist war and fascism.

Ruthlessly will they destroy all who disagree with them on political and trade union questions. The new powers vested in the Executive Council by the Tampa Convention will legalize retali-

ation, persecution and vengeance.

The industrial union forces, with about 1,500,000 members behind them, many national and international unions, the vast majority of federal locals, central bodies and state bodies, have the greatest opportunity in the history of the Federation. The program of the industrial forces would enable the A. F. of L. to halt the rising tide of reaction leading to fasiscm and war. They have the will and courage to organize steel, automobile, rubber and other industries whose owners are the bulwark of reaction in the United States. Their activity will inevitably impel them to take the road of independent political action.

An historical tragedy for the labor movement will be written if these powerful unions, fighting for the principle of industrial unionism in the mass production industries, such as the United Mine Workers, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the United Textile Workers, Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, the Automobile Workers, the United Rubber Workers, Federation of Glass Workers, Oil Field, Gas Well and Refinery Workers, International Typographical Union, Newspaper Guild, Bakery and Confectionery Workers, Brewery, Flour, Cereal and Soft Drink Workers, Clay Workers, Elevator Constructors, Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers, Paper Makers, Sleeping Car Porters, Pulp, Sulphur and Paper Mill Workers and American Federation of Teachers, permit any compromise that precludes the organizing of mass production industries on an industrial union basis.

In the opinion of many, once the officialdom of the A. F. of L. realizes that it can't break away some of the unions supporting the C. I. O. it will cease maneuvering, and yield to the principle of industrial unionism for the mass production industries.

Ranks should be closed. In the excellent resolution adopted by the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party on the C. I. O. it states in part . . . "The Socialist Party of America has always stood for industrial unionism. This is not simply because industrial unionism is the logical and effective method for workers to use in organizing, but because industrial unionism will inevitably promote a higher degree of class-consciousness both on the industrial and political fields."

The curtain came down in Tampa with Hutcheson, Woll and Frey in the center of the stage. Rumblings off stage, however, give evidence that the rank and file are dissatisfied with their performance. Will they heed these ominous rumblings? Many think not.

WHY NOT REMEMBER THE A S M AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR AND SEND A CONTRIBUTION.

The Moscow Trial:

David P. Berenberg

ON August 19, 1936, sixteen men, among them Gregory Zinoviev, L. B. Kamenev, Bakayeff, Mrachkovsky and I. N. Smirnov, old Bolsheviks and co-founders of the Soviet Union, were brought to trial on charges of complicity in the murder of S. M. Kirov, and of terrorist conspiracy to kill Stalin and to overthrow the Soviet government. On August 24 they were found guilty as charged, and sentenced to death. On August 25, if the reports can be believed, they were shot.

The whole world, and in particular socialists everywhere, followed the court proceedings with profound attention. There had been political trials of great importance in the Soviet Union before this, but none of such importance. Here were no Social Revolutionaries, members of a minority party, no Mensheviks, no foreign engineers charged with sabotage. Some, at least, of the sixteen were men of the first importance, men who had once been in the ruling councils of the Soviet Union. The charge was not sabotage, or political opposition, or simple murder—it was the gravest possible accusation that could be levelled against men such as these: counter-revolution and conspiracy to overthrow the government that represented the fruit of their life's work.

Were the charges credible? Were the men guilty? Was it possible that men who had sacrificed ease and comfort, who had risked their liberty and their lives to fight the Czar's government, who had been trained in the school of the Bolshevik revolution, should betray that revolution? What could have been the motives for such an act of betrayal?

Other questions leaped to mind. What sort of trial would the accused get? Who would defend them? Under what circumstances would the trial be conducted? Would the press, the foreign press, be admitted? Would it be open or secret? Why was the trial being called eighteen months after Kirov's death?

The trial began. The charges were elaborated. As they unfolded more men than those on trial were involved. The names of Trotsky and of his son Lev Sedoff were brought in. Trotsky, it was charged, was the fountain head and the inspiration of a vast conspiracy. From his refuge abroad he had arranged a terrorist conspiracy against Stalin, "our great leader," and against the Soviet Union itself. Despairing of finding again a following among the Russian masses, faced with the defeat of all his dire predictions of Stalin's failure, and yet determined to re-establish his personal power even at the cost of wrecking that proletarian state that he helped to found, Trotsky had turned terrorist. He had become filled with venom and hatred for the successful revolution because it had repudiated him. He had sent his emissaries V. P. Olberg, Berman-Yurin, E. S. Holtzman and others into Russia with instruction to get in touch with Zinoviev, Kamenev, Nikolayev, to arrange for the murder of Kirov, of Stalin and of others. Kirov was killed in December 1934. The killing of Stalin was planned

to take place during the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, in 1935. The plan failed. Trotsky, chagrined and angry at the miscarriage, ordered the murder for May 1, 1936. The second plot failed, too. Before a successful coup could be arranged the OGPU closed in on the conspirators. Their foul plot was disclosed. And there they stood —all but the soul of the plan, Leon Trotsky,—to answer with their lives for their treason.

Is it credible? Trotsky a terrorist? Leon Trotsky is the author of the classic argument against individual terrorism. In the days of his revolutionary activities against the old regime he had repudiated terrorism. (Is it irrelevant to point out that in those days Stalin was not averse to political murder and robbery?) Had Trotsky changed now? It seemed unreasonable. But in the Alice in Wonderland history of the Russian Communist Party so many strange things had happened. Had the incredible happened here, too? What does the evidence show?

The evidence—all of it that was published by the newspapers, and all that the USSR has published in a most remarkable book under the title "The Case of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre" (Moscow, 1936) proves—nothing. Just that—nothing.

The report contains confessions by each of the defendants, circumstantial confessions, each implicating the speaker, and one or another of the accused. Each confession contains not merely an admission of the fact of conspiracy to murder, but an abject self-condemnation and an acceptance of the penalty that might be imposed, even unto death. And each confession implicates Trotsky, Zinoviev, Mrachkovsky, Kamenev and Smirnov, each stands up in open court (yes, the trial was open!) in the presence of foreign press correspondents, (yes, the press was there!) and admits his guilt. The confessions allege more than the charges. Not only did Trotsky conspire with old Bolsheviks to kill Stalin; he included in the conspiracy Heinrich Himmler and the Geman Gestapo. Trotskyites and the Nazis working together! Is it credible?

What shall we think of Trotskyites who confess that they are counter-revolutionaries? On page 99 of the book mentioned above we read:

> Vyshinsky (the prosecutor): Formally you were in the Party?
> Holtzman: Yes.
> Vyshinsky: At the same time you were a Trotskyite?
> Holtzman: A Trotskyite.
> Vyshinsky: And—
> Holtzman: A counter-revolutionary.

Is it credible? Notice the seductive sound of Vyshinsky's "And—".

How well-coached was the witness? And who was Holtzman?

What shall we think of Trotskyites, of Old Bolsheviks, who confess that they are fighting against Socialism? Yet on page 69 of the same report we read this testimony of Kamenev:

> Vyshinsky: Consequently your struggle against the leaders of the Party and the government was guided by motives of a personal base character—by the thirst for personal power?
> Kamenev: Yes, by the thirst for power of our group.
> Vyshinsky: Don't you think that this has nothing in common with social ideals?
> Kamenev: It has as much in common as revolution has with counter-revolution.
> Vyshinsky: That is, you are on the side of counter-revolution?
> Kamenev: Yes.
> Vyshinsky: Consequently you clearly perceive that you are fighting against Socialism?
> Kamenev: We clearly perceive that we are fighting against the leaders of the Party and of the government who are leading the country to Socialism.

Vyshinsky: Thereby you are fighting Socialism as well, aren't you?

Kamenev: You are drawing the conclusion of an historian and a prosecutor.

Is it credible? Is it true? Or is there more here than meets the eye. Just why does Kamenev, who could certainly think for himself, repeat exactly the words that Vyshinsky puts upon his lips? And exactly what is the meaning of the beautiful close of Kamenev's testimony—"the conclusion of an historian and *a prosecutor?*"

What are we to think of the extraordinary statement (page 10 ibid) put into the mouths of Zinoviev and Kamenev, that "they bore only moral (sic!) and political responsibility for the assassination of Comrade Kirov?"

What are we to think of Zinoviev's argument, retailed by the accused, M. Lurye, that cooperation with Himmler and the Nazis was justified on the ground that Lassalle had once tried to use Bismarck to further his revolutionary plans? "Why cannot we today utilize Himmler?" (page 76). Is it credible?

Is any of it credible? Who were the witnesses? The accused themselves and no one else. Who corroborated their testimony? No one. Letters were mentioned. They were not produced. Their contents were given from memory, "approximately." Yet the lives of sixteen men and the honor of the USSR depended on these letters.

The accused had no counsel to defend them. The official report says (page 9) that the accused had "declined the services of counsel for defense." De Broukère, Friedrich Adler, Citrine and Schevenels, officials of the Labor and Socialist International, and of the International Federation of Trade Unions, sent a telegram to Moscow demanding that the accused be given "defending counsel who are absolutely independent of the government." There is no such counsel in Russia. What Adler and the others meant was "outside" counsel, lawyers from England or France, or the United States. Georgi Dimitrov, Secretary of the Comintern, wired back that "It is impossible to read, without a feeling of deepest indignation the telegram sent in such haste to the Soviet Government, regarding the trial of the terrorist Trotsky-Zinoviev center by the official representatives of the Labor and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions."

But these sixteen did not defend themselves. They confessed. That is, and forever will be, the historic defense of the Soviets, the cornerstone of the great myth of the "Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre." The accused confessed! But is that the end of the story? Is that all there is to this terrible fabric of accusations? The world is used to confessions. Every country policeman knows how confessions are induced. Confessions were the stock-in-trade of the Catholic Inquisition. Did not Galileo "confess" that he was in error in supposing that the earth moved about the sun? Tyrants depend on the rack to extort confessions. Democracies (and have we not heard a great deal of late about the new democracy in Russia?) do not rely upon confessions. They supplement them with a bulwark of external proof, with documentary proof, with the testimony of witnesses on both sides. The State of New York will not accept a plea of "guilty" in a case involving the death penalty. Can the first proletarian state afford to be less decent, less careful of its honor and dignity, less solicitous of the rights even of its alleged enemies than the bourgeois state of New York?

A confession has value only when it

is made in good faith, voluntarily. Who will vouch for the good faith of these confessions? Who will step forward and prove that they were made voluntarily? Why did not witnesses come forward at the trial, witnesses not under suspicion that they were acting under fear and compulsion, to testify that of their own knowledge these confessions were *bona fide,* and not the extortion of physical and mental torture? Some of the accused had been in prison for eighteen months. Eighteen months is a long time. Who will take these confessions at their face value?

A confession, to have value, must be in accord with reason. Who will believe that a Trotskyite can *confess* to counter-revolution? To *enmity* toward Socialism? Who in his senses will believe that *Trotsky* plotted with Himmler?

But if the confessions are not to be believed, if, by this inference, the sixteen accused are not guilty, why in the name of common sense did they confess? The answer is a grave indictment of the USSR. It is inferential. In the circumstances it is not now susceptible of proof. It may be that it can never be proved. Yet, it fits better with the facts and the known character of the men involved than the fantastic fabric that Vyshinsky wove for the credulous of the world.

Zinoviev, Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, Kamenev and the others "confessed" because by so doing they thought they could save their lives. They were in the hands of the enemy. They knew that Stalin needed a victim for the murder of Kirov. They knew, too, that if they did not confess, no power in the world could save them from framed evidence. They thought that the government wanted not so much their lives as a sacrifice of their characters as revolutionists. The government demanded these confessions in set terms, in almost identical terms, because confessions of that sort make excellent propaganda. Confessions and recantations in the terms of the deepest self-abasement are part and parcel of the Soviet method of government, as they were of the method of the Roman Catholic Church in the days of its temporal power. The accused had been in trouble before, and had recanted and confessed their error. True, they had never confessed to charges as grave as these. Never before had confession carried with it the possibility of the death penalty. Yet, they did confess. They could have done so—since they were assuredly not guilty as charged—for one reason only, in return for a promise of immunity. They were promised their lives in return for their confessions.

A shameful bargain? Assuredly. It would have been better for them, better for the Soviet government, and better for the workers of the world had they fought back. They should have realized that they were doomed; they should have refused to play Stalin's game, and by exposing the shameful demand for false confessions, they should have gone to their inevitable deaths heroically. They were not heroes. They were men eager for life; eager for life even on shameful terms. This is their guilt, and not the terrorism and the counter-revolution with which Stalin through Vyshinsky wishes to blacken their names. It was a shameful bargain into which they entered.

But it was immeasurably more shameful for the men who offered it. Offered it, received the confessions sold at the price of honor and integrity *and double-crossed their victims.* The men who confessed are dead. Were they killed so that the truth might never be known?

Truth is an uncomfortable ghost. It has a way of popping up to confound those who think it is dead. Until the truth is known, Stalin and his followers have these confessions. And they are using them.

But why should we not believe the confessions? Because men simply do not admit their guilt in terms such as these men used. Had Zinoviev, or Kamenev, or Smirnov, or any of the sixteen, risen in his place and said: "Yes! I plotted to kill Stalin because I hold him to be the embodiment of the counter-revolution! I plotted to kill him because he is the enemy of the proletariat," that would have been credible, however much it might have run counter to the known attitude of these men toward individual terror. But they did not say this. Instead, Mrachkovsky "confesses":

> "I am a counter-revolutionary.—I want to depart from life without carrying any filth with me." (p. 138 ibid)

Evdokimov says:

> "The difference between us and the fascists is very much in our disfavor." (p. 166) And again: "Our crimes against the proletarian state and against the international revolutionary movement are too great to make it possible for us to expect clemency." (p. 167)

Dretzer confesses (p. 167) that he has "become an assassin." Reingold says (p. 167) "I and the whole of the terrorist Trotskyite-Zinovievite organization sitting here have been exposed by this trial as the shock-troops, as a white-guard, fascist shock-troop of the international counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie."

Kamenev states: "I ask myself, is it an accident that alongside of myself, Zinoviev, Evdokimov, Bakayev and Mrachkovsky are sitting emissaries of foreign secret-police departments, people with false passports, with dubious biographies and undoubted connections with the Gestapo! No! It is not an accident. We are sitting here side by side with the agents of foreign secret-police departments because our weapons were the same, because our arms became intertwined before our fate became intertwined here in this dock."

Who will believe that these are confessions? Who, but the hoodwinked Russian workers in the grip of a personal dictatorship falsely called the "dictatorship of the proletariat?" They have no choice but to believe. They have no source of information but the offical papers. Those few among the Russian workers who do not believe, those few who know that these "confessions" are incredible, must be very wary how they voice their views. If they speak out loudly, they, too, will be in the dock charged with "treason" and "counter-revolution."

Who in the world outside Russia will believe these "confesssions?" Who but the faithful of the Russian Church. Of that new Russian Church, the Comintern, in which the "guilt" of the Trotsky-ite-Zinovievite Terrorists never had to be proved, because it was from the first an article of faith?

Aside from these none will believe. Here and there a foreign correspondent will say "Amen" to the official fiction because, forsooth, he wishes to continue to write as he pleases.

Who will believe the charge that Old Bolsheviks, that Trotsky, conspired with the Nazis? Who but those who swallowed the criminal theory of social-fascism?

But the people still in possession of their judgment, and free to use it, will treat these "confessions" as they deserve, —with scornful and contemptuous unbelief.

Why was the trial staged? Why was it thought necessary by the highest stra-

tegy of the Politburo, to stage it at this time? Why were precisely these confessions needed? The answer lies in the same book from which I have quoted the "evidence" and the "confessions." Again and again it will be noted that the prosecutor puts words into the mouths of the accused, abject words of self-accusation, and words of bitter condemnation of Trotsky and of his movement. The true defendant in this case is Trotsky. Every effort is made to assassinate his character. His reputation is torn to shreds. He is "exposed" as a man now even without a theory or a platform. How revealing is this statement made by Reingold:

> "I have already stated above that the Trotskyite-Zinovievite united bloc had no new political program. It based itself upon the old thread-bare platform and none of the leaders of the bloc occupied themselves with, or were interested in, the question of drawing up any kind of political program that was to any degree complete and consistent." (p. 10)

Revealing, not of the guilt of the defendants, but of the need and of the intention of the government. This chord is touched again and again. On page 18 we are told that terrorism "is the sole and exhaustive program of this association of political assassins."

On Page 41 Mrachkovsky is made to "admit" that this counter-revolutionary group had no political program, that "the platform drawn up in the preceding period of 1925-27 was upset by the fact of the correctness of the general line of the party."

And so on, *ad infinitum.*

Why does the prosecutor hammer away at this idea? Trotsky is wrong—his theory is obsolete, bankrupt—he turns to terrorism—he wants power—for himself, not for a program—he has no theory—he has no program—he plots with the Nazis—he is old—he is bankrupt. Why ? Why?

Is it possible that the true reason for the trial is a deep-seated wave of popular unrest that frightened the bureaucracy out of its wits? Is there a fissure —a deep, serious fissure—beneath the carefully fostered picture of Soviet uniformity? Was there so much dissatisfaction with the results of Stalin's "correct party line," with "Stakhanovism" and the cult of the "great leader," that a diversion was necessary? Was there so strong a Trotskyite sentiment among the Russian masses that the government had to discredit Trotsky by any means at its disposal? What other explanation fits the facts? Why else this bitter unrelenting war on Trotsky even to the death? Why else the smearing of his character by associating him with the Nazis, the arch-enemies of the working class? Why else the mean move to cause the Norwegian government to deprive him of the right of asylum? On what other basis are we to explain these "confessions" and the international propaganda use to which they are being put?

The trial is not over. The evidence is not all in. The accused are dead (or some of them are!) but the question of their guilt marches on.

Was the trial staged at this time because the Soviet bureaucracy wished to get rid of the Old Bolsheviks in order to make easier that transition to respectability that has been in progress for some time? Is the trial to be linked up with the effort to establish the new constitution? Was it part of the abandonment of old communist ideas, exemplified by the dropping of the literary line, by the surrender of the Kamerny Theatre to bourgeois drama and by the rejection of operas because they attack baptism and medieval knighthood?

Was the trial staged to discredit crit-

icism of the appalling new foreign policy of the Soviets? There has been vehement opposition among radical workers against the Franco-Soviet pact. The failure of the Russian government to support the workers of Spain in their struggle for freedom has aroused widespread doubt and distrust. The Popular Front policy formulated at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern and developed with astounding rapidity in 1935 and 1936, expressed in this country as a backhanded support of Roosevelt in the "Defeat Landon, Hearst and the Liberty League at all costs," has opened the Soviets to the charge that they have abandoned the revolutionary struggle and that they have accepted the discredited theory of the "lesser evil" and of coalition government. Litvinoff's diplomacy and his resort to the League of Nations instead of to the revolutionary workers have awakened the thought that the Soviets are ready to cut loose from the workers elsewhere and to preserve themselves by conforming to the demands of capitalist powers.

The chief critic of these acts was, and is, Trotsky. His scorn, his incisive criticism, his loyalty to the old line, which must arouse shame among the trimmers at Moscow, his skill in invective and his biting analysis, are painful thorns in the side of the Stalinists. Worse, if he was not stopped he might carry with him those workers in western countries who, though abandoned to their fate by the Soviets, were still needed to stimulate foreign opinion favorable to the Moscow government. Was it so necessary to stop him, if to do so meant that his character had to be destroyed? Did the remnant of the Old Bolsheviks have to be murdered judicially to quell Trotsky's influence at home and abroad?

No other event in Soviet history so vividly dramatizes the great question of the nature of the Soviet State. It calls itself a "proletarian dictatorship." Is it that? Or is it a "party dictatorship?" And is it not the dictatorship of a wing of a party? Or even the dictatorship of a self-appointed and self-perpetuating small group? Or, finally, the dictatorship—of one man?

The charge is made in this trial that these men conspired to kill Stalin. And the inference is made that the death of Stalin is the equivalent to the death of the Soviet Union. Does the Soviet Union depend on the life of one man? Is that state proletarian in which the death of one man means the destruction of the state itself?

A trial for treason and murder is a serious matter. In a proletarian state such a trial must be surrounded with all the safeguards known to civilized man. The accused must have counsel. What a reflection on the Soviet Union that no man dared to defend the accused! The accused must have the right to examine witnesses called against them. They must have the right to call witnesses in their own defense. Witnesses must be free to testify without fear. A proletarian state repudiates confessions. What it cannot prove by objective testimony, by unprejudiced witnesses it holds as not proved.

Why did the accused have none of these rights? Why the unseemly haste to kill them? Why no appeal?

The argument will be made—it must be made—that the qualities I have assigned to the proletarian state belong to the classless society that follows after the proletarian dictatorship withers away. In the interim of the proletarian dictatorship there are still classes, and in that case justice is still class justice. Of course, if the accused be members of

the bourgeoisie caught in the act of counter-revolution. And even then the proletarian dictatorship would in times of foreign and domestic peace be meticulous in its demand for proof, and more proof.

These are not times of war. There is no open counter-revolution. There is no opposition press in Russia to exploit the case of the accused. The accused were not bourgeois or aristocrats, but Old Bolsheviks, erstwhile comrades of their judges. Why were they not given at least as much chance for their lives as Sacco and Vanzetti, as Tom Mooney or the Scottsboro boys?

In such a dictatorship such a trial as this becomes credible. But that is no reason why workers the world over should not recognize the truth. Irresponsible dictatorships in the name of the proletariat may do wonders in raising the standard of living of the workers, in preparing national defenses, in making foreign alliances, and in developing industrial resources. They may or may not solve the problems of unemployment and of economic depressions. They may, or may not, foster scientific research. These are debatable questions. One thing is not debatable: irresponsible dictatorships have never led, and cannot lead to Socialism, even when they hand down from above ready-made "democratic" constitutions. And trials of this sort are disturbing proof that the irresponsible dictatorship of Stalin in Russia is not nearing its end.

A WORD ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

NORMAN THOMAS *was the Socialist candidate for President of the U. S. A.*

ERNEST ERBER
is National Chairman of the Young Peoples Socialist League of America. He returned just a few weeks ago from Europe, where he attended the World Youth Congress for Peace at Geneva, after which he spent some time in Spain and Western Europe.

SAM BARON
was until recently President of the Bookkeepers, Stenographers and Accountant's Union. He was present in Tampa at the A. F. of L. Convention.

HERBERT ZAM
is Labor Secretary of Local New York, Socialist Party, and is on the Editorial Staff of the "Socialist Call".

JUSTUS EBERT
is editor of the "Lithographers Journal" and is a member of the Board of the "Socialist Call".

LEW SCOTT
is a member of the Y.P.S.L. of Los Angeles, California, and is also a member of the Left Socialist Zionists. He spent four years in Palestine.

CAROLINE F. URIE
is a very active member in Connecticut, a member of the Socialist Party for many years who has devoted herself to the War Resisters movement.

SOL PERRIN *is an active member of Local New York, Socialist Party.*

BENJAMIN H. WOLF
is editor of "Consumer's Cooperation" in the "Socialist Call;" National Secretary of the Cooperative Committee of the Socialist Party.

FRANK N. TRAGER
is State Secretary of the Socialist Party of New York, and about to assume duties as National Organizational and Labor Secretary of the S. P. of the U. S. A.

A Labor Party and Socialism

Herbert Zam

THE recent presidential election in the United States must once more raise in the mind of every thinking worker the question: "How is the American working class to be won over to the camp of Socialism?" The fact that the working class parties not only made no headway but suffered such a severe defeat, and this after six years of crisis, once more emphasizes how extremely unlikely it is that the American working class will make a sudden leap from capitalist to Socialist ideology.

The millions of workers who voted for Roosevelt voted in the belief that thereby they would be able to achieve a series of reforms. It is significant that whereas in Europe reformism, as distinct from revolutionary Socialism developed as an independent mass movement of the working class, in this country the political consciousness of the working class is not yet sufficiently developed to find expression even in the formation of an independent mass reformist party. It is only in the consideration of this significant point that it is possible at all to grasp the historical significance of a possible labor or farmer-labor party in this country. It is undeniably true that a labor party in this country will be a reformist party, whether such a party comes into birth in the immediate future or in the more distant future. But to declare that revoluionary socialists should therefore oppose such a labor party is infantile. Even reformism can play a progressive role historically. For, by what standards is a labor party to be reformist? By the standards, of course, of an advanced revolutionary philosophy, that is, by the standards of the Socialist Party. But, by the standards of the present political level of the working class a labor party would be a tremendous step forward no matter how conservative its program. The Labor Party would do what the more revolutionary organizations have so far failed to do, separate the working class as a class from the capitalist class on the field where such separation reaches its highest level, on the political field.

Engels, who followed the development of the American labor movement with keen insight, and who in spite of many rebuffs, never ceased urging the early American socialists to become part of the great mass movements, constantly stressed this problem. In a letter to Sorge, September, 1887, he writes:

> "In spite of all, the masses can only be set in motion in a way suitable to the respective countries and adapted to the prevailing conditions—*and this is usually a roundabout way. But everything else is really of minor importance if only they are really aroused.*" (Em phasis mine throughout—H.Z.)

And the passing events only confirmed Engels in this view. In a letter dated February 8, 1890, after he had had ample time to reflect upon the experiences of the labor movement and to emphasize or alter his own views, he wrote:

> "The people of Schleswig-Holstein and their descendants in England and America, cannot be converted by preaching; this stiff-necked and conceited crew must *learn through their own experience.* They are doing that from

year to year, but they are elementally conservative—just because America is so purely bourgeois, has absolutely no feudal past, and is therefore proud of its purely bourgeois organization—and therefore will only be freed through experience from old traditional intellectual rubbish."

Can any one study the history of the labor movement of the last forty years and not marvel at the aptness of this analysis. In fact, what was true in the formative period of the labor movement became even truer as, with the development of Yankee imperialism, a broad labor aristocracy sprang up, which became the dominant factor in the labor movement, which considered itself part of the national prosperity, and which consequently became even prouder of its bourgeois habits and its bourgeois organization. Only in periods of crisis does one observe attempts to break through the wall of bourgeois complacency. And this also Engels had predicted:

"Every step forward must be forced upon them by a defeat"

And it is precisely after every defeat that we notice the labor movement turning to political action in general, and to labor parties in particular, whether it is the Henry George period, the 1904 fermentation, the labor party movement of the twenties, or the current movements.

Conditions in America, and with them the labor movement, have altered considerably since Engels wrote these brilliant paragraphs, but the basic condition which guided Engels in his conclusions has not altered — the unchallengeable fact that politically the working class, as a class, has no independence, is still tied to the capitalist class, and does its bidding. This must still remain the central consideration in all discussions of the labor party problem.

Nor did Engels endeavor to map out a straight road and say to the workers: "This road shall ye follow." Again and again he warns that the movement may assume "unexpected forms," that in the absence of other organizations of the workers more politically developed, "With trade unions and such like must be the beginning if there is to be a mass movement."

"The first great step which is of primary importance," he insisted, "is the constitution of the workers as an independent political party no matter of what kind, *so long as it is a distinct workers party.*"

But it is not enough to have an "objective" attitude toward a labor party movement, to say "It will come" or "It won't come" and then do nothing about it. That is an attitude which is appropriate to bourgeois, above-the-battle philosophers. A socialist who climbs up to Mount Olympus to gaze down upon the proletarian world with a superior air has thereby climbed right out of socialism. There can be no socialism unless it is imbedded deep in the proletariat. Modern Socialism must not commit the fatal error of the early German immigrants, who were devoted, energetic but useless because they scorned the halting steps of the American labor movement. Engels chided them upon this attitude. In Feb. 1887 he wrote:

"As soon as there was a national American working class movement independent of the Germans, my standpoint was clearly indicated by the facts of the case. The great national movement, no matter what its first form, is the real starting point of American working class development; if the Germans join it in order to help it or hasten its development in the right direction, they may do a great deal of good and play a decisive part in it: *If they stand aloof they will dwindle down into a dogmatic sect, and will be brushed aside as people who do not understand their own principles.*"

So once it is agreed that the formation of a labor party would, in the present

period, serve as a means of advancing the political consciousness of the working class, then the attitude of socialists toward it is clear, namely, support. This decides only the principled question, however. Tactical considerations are also important. Merely to declare that the Socialist Party should do nothing to promote a labor party, but should enter a labor party if it is ever formed, is to avoid the main issue: what are the prospects for the formation of a labor party? If after examining all the circumstances we conclude that the formation of a labor party is extremely unlikely, then it becomes our duty to tell the working class that all movements for the formation of a labor party are useless and futile. If, on the other hand, an examination of the circumstances indicates the likelihood, the probability, if not the inevitability, of the formation of a labor party, then it is essential that our role be a different one.

It is just as important to answer the question of the perspective of a labor party as it is to answer the question of the perspective of economic development. For while our principles remain unchanged, our tactics are very closely connected with the nature of the economic and political conditions in the country. Discussion of economic perspectives is always important so that we may try to determine our line of strategy in advance to coincide with what we believe to be the economic development. A long discussion is not required to come to the conclusion that the formation of a labor party in this country is very likely. The mere fact that from 1920 this idea has persisted in the American labor movement, that in state after state are found experiments with state labor parties, that local labor parties are constantly springing up, that now one union and now another gives consideration to the question of a labor party, that such movements as the American Labor Party and the Labor Non-Partisan League are created, all indicate the likelihood of a labor party. All these phenomena strengthen the conclusions to be drawn from the experiences of the workers in other countries with labor party movements. Where there is a great disparity between the political and the economic organizations of the working class, as there is at present in the United States and as there was in Great Britain at the time of the founding of the Labor Party; when events cause the working class to turn to political action, they do not create brand new organizations, nor do they suddenly flock into hitherto relatively unimportant organizations engaged in political activity. Instead, they endeavor to utilize their own already existing organizations (that is, the trade unions) for the new task confronting them. A labor party is therefore essentially the trade unions in politics, but in politics on a basis of class independence. No one who knows the American scene can deny that more and more the working class will be forced into politics. The olden days when the Gompers insistence upon exclusively economic action ruled the labor movement is a thing of the past.

It is with this in mind that the socialist tactics must be determined. And obviously, if all agree that once a labor party is formed socialists must be in it, if it is agreed that historically a labor party is progessive and therefore should receive socialist support, then it is essential that in the formative stages of the labor party movement socialists play a positive rather than a negative or an indifferent role. In order to be able to

wield an influence in the labor party after it is formed socialists in their unions and mass organizations, in their general political activity must promote the movement for a labor party, must anchor the Socialist Party inside that movement, must secure positions of influence in this movement so as to be able to wield that influence also on behalf of Socialism.

The Socialist Party, not only in the interests of the socialist movement in this country, but also in the immediate interests of a labor party, can under no circumstances give up its existence as an independent revolutionary party, operating as a progressive force inside the labor party. This was stressed by Engels even at the moment when he was hammering away on the need for a mass movement. This must be kept in mind by those who believe that a revolutionary Socialist Party becomes superfluous when a Labor Party is born, that the labor party itself can do all of the things which socialists want done. Let us again listen to Engels:

> "Facts must be hammered into people's heads, and then things move faster; most rapidly, of course, *where there already is an organized and theoretically trained section of the proletariat*".

That is, even the most elementary of developments can be helped along by an already existing Socialist Party, even though small, provided it plays a positive role. Engels furthermore foresaw the final victory of Socialism over "laborism" and other forms of petty bourgeois confusion.

> "A nucleus which retains the theoretical insight into the nature and the course of the entire movement, keeps in progress the process of fermentation . . . *finally again comes to the top.*"

Thus to Engels, the historic usefulness of the labor party movement lay in its serving as an instrument which would assure the ultimate victory of Socialism. He obviously did not believe that a labor party would itself become a Socialist Party, else why talk about the socialists coming out on top?

One further word from Engels is required to shed light upon a problem which will torment socialists today—the problem of the inter-relation between labor party and Socialist Party. Those who believe that Engels was so absorbed with the movement as a whole that this "small" problem escaped him are mistaken. In a letter to Mrs. Wishnevetsky he says:

> "It is possible to work along with the general movement of the working class at *every one of its stages without giving up or hiding our own distinct position and organization.* I am afraid that if the German Americans (i. e. the German immigrant socialists—H.Z.) choose a different line *they will commit a grave mistake.*"

It would be useless scholasticism thus to bring Engels into the picture were it not that impending events in the American labor movement give his ideas contemporary value. It would be well both for our "practical" trade unionists, who scorn the Socialist movement for its small size, and for the "pure" Socialists who have only contempt for the labor party movement because of its confusion and lack of Socialist program, to spend a few hours with Engels to convince themselves that it is not necessary for one to abandon Socialism in order to understand the labor movement, that it is not necessary to abandon the labor movement in order to be a good socialist.

Socialism is not advanced by mere agitation and propaganda. These are of value only insofar as they consciously direct the workers toward Socialism if they have been set in motion by the pressure of historic developments. The

growth of a socialist party is therefore a by-product, historically speaking, of the development of the political consciousness of the working class, and anything which develops the political consciousness of the working class will thereby develop the socialist movement. But the socialist movement can profit from such a development only if the conscious socialists, organized into a disciplined party, are prepared to take advantage of every rise in working class understanding to promote Socialism. Thus there is a mutual inter-action—the growth of a labor party promotes the growth of Socialism. The Socialist Party, through its organized activity, accelerates the growth of class consciousness. Without a Socialist Party the political development of the working class may be a long drawn out process even with a labor party. The existence of a strong disciplined revolutionary Socialist Party in the period of progressive reformism of the working class (labor party era) can serve to make this period brief and productive.

It must be assumed that once a labor party comes into existence its path will be even and uni-directional. It is not impossible that an American labor party will have in its bosom Longites, Coughlinites, Townsendites, and other elements and movements detrimental to the cause of the working class. What can serve as a cement inside of the labor party, to bind the truly working class elements together, and to guard it against capture by enemies, if not a disciplined Socialist Party?

In brief, the Socialist Party in this country can play a role similar to that played by the Independent Labor Party in the British Labor Party. Study will serve to dispel any fears that the mere existence of a labor party will operate as a liquidatory agent upon the Socialist Party. The I.L.P. joined the Labor Party almost upon its formation. It operated on a disciplined basis inside this Labor Party. As the Labor Party grew, the I.L.P. grew. While the Labor Party was recruiting new organizations into its ranks, the I.L.P. was recruiting the most progressive members into its ranks. The I.L.P. and the Labor Party were not rivals. They merely complemented each other.

Because of the more complicated nature of the situation in this country (the existence of the Communist Party; the split in the labor movement and prejudices against Socialism, the influence of the capitalist parties inside the labor movement) the relations between the labor party and the Socialist Party will not be so simple as the relations between the Labor Party and the I.L.P. were in England, but essentially the same pattern will probably reproduce itself.

It is further necessary to bear in mind that a labor party can never become a revolutionary party because of the nature of its organization and composition. It will go through two periods. The first will be a progressive period during which it will promote the separation of workers from capitalists. During its second period it will tend to hold back these same workers from a further advance toward a revolutionary position. In this period it will probably begin to disintegrate, but it will have already served its purpose and the Socialist Party will fall heir to all those elements whose political maturity came about inside the labor party. This will be the period of the mass socialist party. This period will probably coincide with a more severe breakdown of capitalism, when not reforms, but the struggle for

power will be the immediate objective of the working class. The Socialist Party will then have to fulfill its historic mission as the leader of the struggle for the transformation from capitalism to Socialism. But all this is possible only on the basis of the necessary preparations in the entire party for the co-existence of labor party and socialist party. That preparation requires both a positive attitude toward the labor party and a stubborn maintenance of the Socialist Party.

Haim Kantorovitch: A Tribute

David P. Berenberg

AFTER the death of the "Class Struggle" an interim of ten years followed during which the Socialist Party had no English publication other than the daily and weekly propaganda papers. Few, apparently, felt the need for something more substantial; for a paper or a magazine in which the problems posed to the socialist movement by the rapidly changing face of the world could be adequately discussed. For some years the writer cast about among his friends in the party in the hope of finding those few whose enthusiasm could be concretized into action. Then he found Anna Bercowitz, and through her Haim Kantorovitch, who had been making the same search independently.

The three at once clicked. We began seriously to plan the paper in September, 1931. By December the first issue was off the press. A paper born as was the *American Socialist Quarterly,* in a time of ferment inside and outside the movement, can have no placid existence. A paper that, like the *ASQ,* was published neither for gain, nor for enhancement of reputations, but solely to mold opinion in the direction of Socialism, is of necessity the reflection of the lives and thoughts of its sponsors. The numbers of the *ASQ* were not planned; they were lived. They created themselves out of the changing situations in the party and in the world, out of the give and take of discussion among the editors. In these discussions Haim Kantorovitch, more often than not, was the guiding spirit. His keen analysis of events current and yet to come, his understanding of human character, his insight into the strategy of his opponents contributed more than any other factor to the success of the *ASQ.*

For the last five years the *ASQ,* and in the last year the *ASM,* were Haim Kantorovitch's life. He gave to it the greater part of his time. He took its problems with him to the sanatorium. In the long hours of his loneliness in Los Angeles and at Liberty he pondered its future course. In his last days he summoned up the remnants of his strength to write for it an article of pungent warning to that party for which he was giving up his life.

It was the joy of his life to be able to create. Haim Kantorovitch was not only a philosopher. He was more than the strategist and the theoretician of the movement. He was an artist. He was a poet who had lost faith in what is usually called poetry. He thought that these times had no use, no ear, no time and no heart for poetry. The days to come would not even know poetry, as we know it today. Whether he was right in this, or wrong (and in this

matter I did not agree with him) he had to find an outlet for the frustrated poetic gifts with which nature had endowed him. He found this avenue in the *ASQ*.

If you read his articles carefully you will find in them not only the expression of a sound Socialism. You will find the creative artist with the poet's sense for the right word. You will find the exactness of expression that comes of the poet's sense of form, sound and color. He was slow in writing; exasperatingly slow from the point of view of the editorial office. But he was slow because he was a poet. He would not hurry. The printer could wait. The important thing was the right tone, the right atmosphere.

When I became more closely acquainted with him I was amused, and at the same time impressed by his creative methods. He would greet me with a casual phrase. "Abraham Cahan," he might say, "is a socialist. But his is the Socialism of the hopeless." A few days later he would expand this theme in a casual speech full of satiric and cutting humor. At last it would blossom—blossom is the right word—into an article. It became a typical Kantorovitch article whose pertinence, power and wit were the joy of his friends and the despair of his enemies, but whose poetry few recognized.

He is gone now. Other theoreticians will arise. Other writers full of cogency and wit will fill his place. He knew he was not indispensable to the movement. But few among those who follow will have that combination of broad knowledge, deep human understanding, poetic vividness and human kindness that made up Haim Kantorovitch. He was no angel. He had a tendency to emphasize and subtly caricature the failings of his opponents. He was often cynical and bitter. He was sometimes unjust. But these flaws in him merely prove his humanity. We who have lost him would not have had him otherwise than as he was.

ARTICLES TO COME

THE NEW ROLE OF AMERICAN SOCIALISM — *Frank McCallister*

TOWARD CIVIL RIGHTS IN DIXIE — *Lillian Symes*

ANALYSIS OF THE SOVIET RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION

and articles by G. D. H. Cole, Harold J. Laski, and others.

To the Congress of the Soviets of the U.S.S.R.

Excerpts from Open Letter from the Foreign Delegation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party

Comrades and Citizens,

Although linked with Bolshevism, not only by a common origin and by many years of joint work in the creation of the class organizations of the proletariat but also by the similarity of the socialist goal sought, the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party came to the parting of the ways on the question of the methods of the revolutionary struggle and the principles of proletarian organization.

The Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party emphatically rejected the policy of the forcible overthrow of the Soviet regime, which would only have smoothed the path of the landed capitalist counter-revolution. The aim of the policy of our party was, and remains, not the collapse of the Soviet regime but the development along positive lines of the revolutionary and socialist possibilities inherent in it.

At the same time, our party has never concealed, nor does it today conceal, the fact that it sees in the terrorist dictatorship which came into being during the Civil War but which outlasted this and is becoming increasingly rigid; which relies upon the bureaucracy and the police and monopolizes the rights to which, on paper, the toiling masses are entitled, —that it sees in this dictatorship the greatest danger for the fate of the revolution and for the permanence of the achievements which the masses have won during the course of the revolution. Whilst it has defended the Soviet Revolution by all the means within its power against the danger of the counter-revolution within and against the foe without, our party has never, at any stage of the revolutionary process, ceased to stand for the fundamental democratization of the Soviet regime, the truly free self-government of the working masses in State and municipality, in the political trade union and economic spheres, as the decisive and indispensable pre-requisite for the safeguarding of the interests of these masses, for the defense of the revolution and for the realization of the steps along the path to Socialism as these became possible.

But no persecution has sufficed to make the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party forsake the path indicated by its dead leader, Martov. It awaits with satisfaction the historic moment, when its main watchword—the watchword of the democratization of the Soviet regime —becomes the watchword of the entire public in the Soviet Union: Freedom of speech, of the press, of faith, of meetings, of demonstrations, etc.

At the same time, whilst welcoming the proclamation of the principle of the democratization of the Soviet regime, our party notes, with the gravest concern, the present glaring discrepancy between the promises and the actual political and social course taken by the U.S.S.R.

On the eve of the introduction of a constitution which promises the citizens the widest possible measure of self-government in State and municipality, the power within the State is becoming in-

creasingly a personal power; every instruction from on high, every idea expressed above, immediately becomes a law with binding force; unthinking obedience to the leader becomes the highest virtue of the citizen, whilst on the other hand, any holding of other views, every free and manly word of criticism, is treated as the most heinous crime; the party dictatorship which replaced the dictatorship of the working class has been succeeded in turn by the dictatorship of one individual over the party, over all its organizations, and even over the Central Committee itself.

Justice and freedom for the individual are proclaimed but in the meantime the practice of terrorism is not only not abated but even rendered more fierce. Moreover, the recent trial, which terminated with the shooting of sixteen of the accused, among them some of the best-known and oldest leaders of the Bolshevik movement, not only created an atmosphere of terror and intimidation within the country and the Communist Party itself, but also draws once again a fatal dividing line between the Soviet Union and the broad masses throughout the world, by filling them with doubts as to the sincerity and seriousness of the democratization announced, the tidings of which they had received with such gladness, and by driving a fresh wedge into their unity, in process of being restored, and by weakening their readiness and determination to defend the Soviet Union against all its foes.

Our party considers it its revolutionary and socialist duty not to keep silent as to the frightful danger to the internal development and the international security of the Soviet Union resulting from all these contradictions, but, on the contrary to lay special stress on them.

In the same way, it regards it as its revolutionary and socialist duty to express, with all clearness and definiteness, its critical view of the Draft Constitution laid before you.

We will confine ourselves to characterizing the fundamental failings of the Draft. This fundamental failing consists in the fact that the Draft, whilst equipping the individual with every possible right, nevertheless refuses him the fundamental right in default of which all the other rights lose their worth: the right to free association in collective groupings and the right to free intellectual and organizational self-determination for the groupings allowed by the Draft.

True, the Draft proclaims the principle of the *"organizational self-expression and political activity of the masses of the people"* and the right of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. "to combine in public organizations." In practice, however, what can be made of this principle and this right when the Draft in question lays down from the outset that the Communist Party must represent the "leading nucleus of all organizaions of the toilers, *both public and state,"* and this not in virtue of free election and free intellectual and political self-determination but in virtue of compulsory binding provisions of the Constitution? What can, in practice, happen when the monopoly of political representation is placed from the outset, by means of provisions which are equally compulsorily binding, in the hands of this party, which is built up on severely authoritarian lines, according to principles which exclude any conflict of opinion and any grouping of opinion within its ranks? Is there not in this the danger that the Constitution itself will become nothing but a screen behind which both the personal dictatorship and the regime of the omnipotence of the bu-

reaucracy (which has now been declared to be out-of-date and contrary to the interests of the country and the revolution of the toilers) will continue in existence? Will not the omnipotent bureaucracy, which has at its command the material pre-requisite enumerated in Article 125, necessary in order that use may be made of the liberties guaranteed the citizens by this and other Articles, with these tools will not the bureaucracy render the liberties themselves illusory?

Thus, the most important points of all, the principles of the fundamental democratization of the Soviet regime have found no realization in the Draft. But, great as the defects of the new Constitution may be, the very proclamation of those principles is bound to direct the *political consciousness and the organizational work* of the toiling masses into a new and fruitful channel. In this Constitution the masses will find the basis on which to carry on, little by little, and to bring to completion, without new catastrophes and upsets, the task of making democratic the Soviet regime. This, in order to secure not merely an illusory but a real right to "organizational self-expression and political activity" and to gain the real *political and organizational liberation* of their associations and groupings from any and every bureaucratic tutelage forcibly imposing itself from above. To do this, however, the working masses must be *active, persistent and consistent* in taking advantage of the possibilities, in making use of the rights, which the new Constitution offers them.

Our party is convinced that the conditions of development of the Soviet society during its present phase will force the energies of the toilers, and above all of the advance guard of the working class, in the direction of a utilization of the possibilities along such lines.

In this phase not only does material, cultural, social and political inequality persist; it even becomes more acute. Only a real development of the organizational and political activity of the masses themselves can prevent the perpetuation of a situation in which you have, on the one hand increasing prosperity for a small strata, and on the other hand eternal misery for the broad masses. Only this development by the masses of activity of their own, can ward off the danger of this small strata becoming a petrified privileged class, the masses, alien if not actually antagonistic, to them. This alone can prevent the privileged strata from monopolizing for itself the fruits of the economic progress of the country, which would prevent the possibilities of socialist development inherent in this economic progress from taking effect and thus endanger the "right to work," the proclamation of which the Draft Constitution can be proud.

And therefore, it is again only by the development of the activity of the masses themselves that every possibility of a fascist degeneration of the Revolution, and every danger of a capitalist restoration can be prevented and the unhindered further development of the country towards Socialism be assured.

At the same time, only real organizational self-expression and real political activity by the working masses themselves, which would make these masses the true rulers of the country, can provide the guarantee that all workers, all peasants, all toilers, will be ready, when danger threatens from without, to rise in defense of the country. In this mass activity, too, lies the only force capable of giving a powerful impetus to the cause of the restortation of the *unity of the working-class movement throughout*

the world, of multiplying tenfold the working-class forces in the fight against fascism, and, by assuring the *victory of world Socialism* over this, the worst foe both of the workers and of the U.S.S.R., of ensuring also the perfection and the permanence of the socialist transformation in the Soviet Union.

Only a policy based on such self-expression and on the development of such activity by the toiling masses, can unite the toilers of all countries in a passionate determination to maintain peace, to ward off from the Soviet Union the military dangers which threaten her, and to do everything within their power for the *defense* of the Soviet Union and to ensure its *victory* should the fascist and imperialist brigands embark, notwithstanding, on a war and attack Russia; finally only such a policy could ensure that the war itself should not become a source of new triumphal marches for nationalism and chauvinism, but the instrument for the overthrow of world capitalism, the prelude to a new era, the *era of Socialism and lasting peace.*

That is why—for the sake of the interests of the working masses, for the sake of peace and the defense of the Soviet Union, the unity of the working-class movement and the triumph of Socialism in Russia and in the whole world—that is why, in the new phase of the Revolution now beginning, the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party regards as the main task the *promotion in all directions of the development and expansion of the free organizational self-expression and the political activity of the toiling masess.*

You represent millions of toilers of the Soviet Union. It is up to you to give them that real liberty of action and organization so urgently called for by the interests of these toilers, by the interests of the Revolution and of Socialism. It is up to you to facilitate the transition in the Soviet Union to a regime of complete and fully-developed democracy of the toilers—the transition to a regime which would weld together in coherent, democratic and disciplined work *all* the proletarian socialist forces of our revolutionary country, would make the country an invincible bulwark of international working-class unity, would mobilize the entire working class of the world for the defense of this, make possible a common victory over world fascism, which threatens both alike, and establish securely on the ashes of this last defensive position of capitalism the triumph of Socialism in the Soviet Union and throughout the world. Finally, it is up to you, on the threshold of the new era of the Constitution, to set about abolishing the contradictions referred to which undermine the Constitution; to open wide the gates of the prisons and the Polit-isolators, to destroy the barriers of banishment and the barbed wire of the concentration camps, and thus to create the atmosphere of confidence and *elan* which would give the toilers of the Soviet Union and of the whole world the happy feeling that in very truth a new and glorious chapter of the revolution was opening; that the country, strengthened by the victory of the revolution, was truly abandoning the regime of terror and setting out on the path which leads, via democratic liberty, to the triumph of Socialism.

The hopes of all toiling humanity are centered on your Congress and the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party desires nothing more earnestly than that these may be justified. For our party has no other interests than those of the toilers, of the Revolution and of Socialism; all it asks for itself is the possi-

bility of taking part, freely and in all openness, within the framework and on the basis of the new Constitution, in the fight for Socialism, which makes the socialization of the means of production the bedrock of a real liberation of human personality and for the truly free self-determination of the working masses.

All power to the free development of the activity, and to the free organization, of the toilers!

All power to Socialism!

The Farmer and Collectivization

Justus Ebert

YEARS ago, a prominent American socialist, H. G. Wilshire, argued that farming would not be adaptable to Socialism until the small family farm was replaced by a farm economy tending in that direction. He saw no prospect for such a tendency ever to manifest itself. Secondly, he was somewhat pessimistic regarding any prospect of the socialization of farming in the United States. Nevertheless, the time when such a tendency will manifest itself is fast approaching, if it is not already here. The small family farm, apparently, is going the way of the family factory and the family store. Collectivization has already come, not in Russia alone, but also in "good old U.S.A."

It came as a political measure in the New Deal. In the endeavor of Roosevelt to preserve capitalism, including agriculture, the federal administration, the state, has attempted to regulate, if not stop, overfarming in behalf of the small family farm, on a large organized scale. By way of crop restriction, rehabilitation, resettlement and soil conservation, it has demonstrated the helplessness of the small family farm and the necessity, consequently, of a new farm economy on a collective basis.

When headlines announce "Tugwell Rehabilitation Group to be Raised This Week to 525,000 Families," a la New York *Times,* they announce the passing of the farmer whom Ben Marsh defined as "an individualist in a collectivist society." He is no longer extant. He has been made logical, that is, collectivized —with a vengeance! The revolution has left him dazed and unable to grasp the meaning of it all.

Of course, there is no preservation for small family farm economy via the New Deal. What the New Deal has done by way of its farm programs, with their subsidies and loans, is to deepen the hold of the banks, insurance, loan and mortgage companies, on the farm. The result is that, in addition to a political collectivization on the farm, we have an economic one as well. Increased concentration of agricultural wealth is taking place, and big finance and big business are, increasingly so, making a more direct appearance in farming, as a consequence, than ever before.

Banks and insurance companies are foreclosing small farms. The DuPonts and Fords call attention to the farm as a raw material producing adjunct to basic industries, like chemicals and autos. Agriculture is, consequently, regarded as the next field of big capital investment. Mass production needs mass farming. High protective tariffs, trade agreements detrimental to domestic agriculture, exclusion policies, soaring

land values and taxes, new machinery, depression—all help along the necessity for, and the trend towards, big farming. With these the small farmer is unable to contend and is, as a result, on his way out. Corporation and chain farming are taking his place. Farming is on the way to a real, basic collectivization.

During 1935, the Bureau of Agriculture issued statistics showing that in 1930 the total value of farm lands owned by corporations was $249,000,000. In 1932, it rose to $511,000,000. In 1933, the depression's worst year, it was $770,000,000. The climb in four years averaged over 100% per year, or 412% all told. At this rate of increase, 1936 corporation-owned farm lands will exceed $2,000,000,000 in value.

According to the same authority, in 1933 corporations owned 7.2% of the farm land. In 1935, corporate holdings had risen to 10.1% in Iowa, most "prosperous" of farm states. The 1936 figures will undoubtedly show further increases.

A recent study illustrates the process of absorption. It declares "The Aetna Life Insurance Company is said to have acquired $9,000,000 worth of farm properties in 1930 to 1932." The same study declares further, "Of the $1,900,000,000 loaned by Federal Farm Banks on farm mortgages during the past two and one-half years, about 90% has gone to refinance existing debts." This enriches big finance, while rendering the small farmer unable either to expand or improve his farm equipment. Further, despite this refinancing of existing debts, foreclosings grow apace. During August, 1935, the number instituted by the Federal Land Banks totalled 1,209. This was an increase of 310 over July, 1935, and 658 over August, 1934. The A.A.A. contributed to this condition of affairs. It made possible a "prosperity" in which foreclosure is again profitable.

The hubbub created last June by A.A.A. payments to big farm corporations brought to public notice some startling facts concerning them. The New York *Times* of June 20 stated that Secretary Wallace's report on the same clearly shows that "the big money went to large producers who farmed vast acreage of cotton, tobacco and sugar."

"An analysis of the outstanding contracts under the 1935 corn-hog program," states the New York *Times,* "showed that out of 107,579 farms eligible to participate in that program, 67,302 were owned by 111 life insurance companies, 21,447 by banks, and the remaining 18,830 by 3,491 other owners."

In one of his *Socialist Call* weekly articles, Norman Thomas stated: "In California, a well informed comrade tells me that 35% of the fertile lands of the central valleys where so much of America's fruit and vegetable supply is grown is corporation-owned or farmed. This for two reasons: 1) the terrible epidemic of foreclosures in the depression; and 2) the fact that corporations can make better use of machinery and manage the marketing problem better. Thus a corporation which loses on vegetables from Arizona because of a bad market may win later on crops from California, or vice versa."

This "vice versa" calls attention to another agricultural phenomenon making for farm collectivization, namely, the chain farms. Representative Merlin Hull of Wisconsin, writing in the *Progressive* of April 25, 1936, calls attention to "an English estate which owns 100 or more good farms in the richest sections of Illinois, which it operates by tenants, and which is said to have received over $500,000 of A.A.A. through the simple process of evicting the ten-

ants and reducing the area of its lands under cultivation."

Many of the banks and insurance companies are undoubtedly chain farm proprietors. The writer of this article some twelve years ago met a former socialist party organizer in Chicago, who had once been very active among the tenant farmers of Oklahoma and Arkansas. It was even then this organizer's firm belief that some day the banks and insurance companies, in order to protect their mortgages, would have to step in and reorganize agriculture in the Southwest on the basis ultimately conducive to collectivized farming. Otherwise, so poverty-stricken and unproductive was tenant farming, the banks and insurance companies would not be able to realize on their investments.

Since then, the depression has come and the banks and insurance companies are stepping in, as already indicated, and our organizer friend is enrolled among the prophets, thanks to his socialist insight and foresight.

More enlightenment on this point is given in the newspaper reports on A.A.A. payments. They show a system of "multiple land ownership," in which over 55 banks and insurance companies operated 150 or more farms under A.A.A. contracts in 1934; and 39,700 corn-hog farms and 10,859 cotton farms were controlled. Equitable Life Assurance of the United States was credited with 2,158 corn-hog farms; Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, with 3,112 corn-hog farms, 1,141 cotton farms and 332 tobacco farms.

In 1934, "Multiple owners" received from A.A.A., $2,900,000 for not raising hogs; $650,000 for not raising cotton, and $73,000 for not raising tobacco.

A family farm is a farm operated and owned by the farmer and his family. A writer on the farm question states, "The great majority of existing farms are of less than 200 acres. The possessor of a section, or 640 acres, is a big farmer." One can conclude for himself how many times the size of the farm is increased under the "multiple ownership" of the banks and insurance companies as described above. The latter farms, like the skyscrapers of modern finance, are overtowering in size and proportions, generally.

However, some big individual farmers are farming on a scale that includes many sections. Among them, the writer referred to in a previous paragraph, includes President Roosevelt, with "a 2,500 acre stock farm in Georgia;" Vice-President Garner, with a "Texas pecan farm;" and, surprisingly, "George C. Berry, final custodian of the vanished N.R.A., is the largest farm owner in the Southeast, with some 30,000 acres." To these should be added the 75,000 acre property of Ford at Cherry Hill, Georgia. Hearst must not be overlooked. He is the owner of the nation's largest acreage of agricultural and pastoral lands. Three ranches alone have a combined area of 1,220,000 acres. In addition, he owns seven other large tracts in California, Florida and Mexico.

Then we have also the great canning and preserving companies, the Libbys, DelMontes, Doles, Heinzes, Liptons, Campbells, et al, who either own or dominate large farming sections, not to mention the milk distributing companies, with their control of dairy farming. "The truck gardens of New Jersey, the onion fields of Ohio, the lettuce patches of California, all are subject to large ownership," and the scene of revolts of farm laborers and their repression by big farmers, acting in an organized fascistic manner.

In connection with the subject of farm collectivization, farm tenantry also presents itself. As already indicated, tenantry may not pay, and may, consequently, hasten collectivization. It breaks down under the exactions of big finance as represented by banks and insurance companies. It will also break down under the new farming that will be coordinated with industry. Industrialized farming will, apparently, take its place.

But first, tenant farming presents many interesting phenomena, showing that the family farmer may still exist and be collectively exploited. One farm firm had to split A.A.A. cotton payments among 1,125 tenants. As already indicated above in the case of the English Illinois chain farm, tenants are often evicted, especially in Arkansas, in a manner that, for ruthlessness, leaves the old time Irish evictions many degrees in the shade. Tenant farming constitutes 79% of all farming in the South. It is one of the biggest contributing factors to the poverty of that section of the country, and most likely, will have to be destroyed by the corporations.

In the North, Iowa, for instance, tenant farming has other startling phenomena. It tends to community instability. That may also contribute to farm industrialization and, via the latter, to farm collectivization. A new form of migration is developing that, apparently, ends in the farmer bundling his family into an auto, to "bum" the country in search of either new farms or employment. Under the lease system, Iowa tenant farmers move from farm to farm periodically; hence the instability referred to.

An A. P. dispatch from Ames, Iowa, says: "census figures indicate about 43% of the farms in thirty-eight states are now operated by tenants, compared with 25% in 1890. In Iowa alone the number of tenants increased more than 8% from 1930 to 1935. Nearly 50% of Iowa's 222,000 farms are now tenant operated." On such cracking foundations does present day farming attempt to thrive in behalf of the family farm.

Of course, there are some who will say "great farms are still few in the nation" and that the family farm still prevails. But how, and to what end! The end of the foreclosure and big finance ownership and operation, finally?

And is it true that the family farm still prevails? May it not be a fact that though the percentage of corporation farming is small, relatively it is the most important factor in farming even today; this not only because of its implications of great economic and social changes, but its actual present day results? Let's see.

Reverting back to the article in the *Progressive* by Representative Hull, we learn therein that "one-half of the total farm income, or four billions of dollars, it is said, went to one-sixth of the farmers, approximately 1,116,000. This number includes the large farm owners, cotton and sugar plantation people, the large dairy and truck farms near the big cities, the more favorably situated agriculturists who are favored by the size and fertility of their soils and their close proximity to the best markets. It includes also farm corporations . . . and the non-mortgaged farms. One-half the total income thus goes mainly to those who are so situated that even the depression had little effect on them."

On the contrary, the depression, by precipitating the A.A.A. payments, has had a very beneficial effect on them, enriching and entrenching them as never before.

The prospects are that this tendency will continue. We have predictions of "a real problem in 1938 or 1939," by Mr. J. P. Kennedy, head of the Rooseveltian commission on exchanges and securities. What then? More foreclosures? More corporation farming growth?

The world war gave the family farmer a comeback, only to visit the depression on him earliest of all. What will the economic reaction of 1938 or 1939, with its new liquidation, do to him? Reasoning from historic precedent, we wonder if anything will be left of him at all. "Recovery" aftermaths will mean a more complete ruin.

Farming is no longer a peculiar institution, exempt from the socialist fruition of capitalist economics. The doctrine of peculiarism was buried with Southern agrarians via the Civil War. World depressions are going to bury it with the Northern agriculturists. With rampant class distinctions now raging in farming, propertyless hired laborers and farm tenants and small owners against big farmers, corporations, banks and insurance companies, it is difficult to take the argument of agricultural exceptionalism in favor of the family farm seriously. The class struggle rages now in agriculture as in industry. Both are of a capitalist piece and getting to resemble each other very closely.

The remedy in both places is collectivization, socialist collectivization.

In conclusion let us repeat some observations on corporation farming in California from the *Socialist Call* by Norman Thomas, quoted above. They are applicable on wider scale. "Now all this means that it is folly to think of the farm problem in terms of the man on his own land; folly to think there is one farm problem; folly to try, like some New Deal liberals to solve the problem of tenant farmers and hired hands by putting them in this machine age on little farms for which they'll be paying for two generations." And most likely never own!

The New Deal is no way out. As already indicated, for the family farm, it is the way in deeper.

The farmer can't dodge collectivization. The only problem confronting him is, which does he prefer, corporate or social collectivization? It appears probable that he'll get the corporate kind first; with the social kind following. This is evolution under capitalism, via concentration to collectivization and Socialism.

Thus, despite the prophecies of Wilshire, the small family farm is on the way to an adaptation that he believed impossible. And, unless all signs fail, the small family farmer will journey over the same route to the same destination, the socialization of agriculture.

This socialization can be brought to fruition with the aid of the farmers and farm workers themselves, first, by recognizing its inevitability; second, by organizing accordingly. It is to be hoped that the farmers and farm workers will not commit the futile opposition to concentration of their industrial counterparts, who attempted to "bust the trust," only to be "busted" by it.

READER'S FORUM

In pursuance with the policy of the A.S.M. to conduct a Readers' Forum, a number of articles in this issue are communications from our readers in reply to articles which have appeared in previous issues.

For a Socialist Policy in Palestine

The Jewish Problem and Palestine.
An Answer to Felix Morrow

Lew Scott

THE migration of Jews to Palestine began in the last decade of the 19th century. For many years it was a thin stream of several thousands annually. During the first seven months of 1914 the Jewish immigrants numbered 10,000. During 1935 they mounted to 65,000. The demand for entry into Palestine has always greatly exceeded the number of Jews that actually entered. The reason was not the absorbtive capacity of Palestinian economy but rather the mechanically imposed immigration restrictions, which clearly reflect and serve British imperialist policy. What is it that has brought over 400,000 Jews to Palestine? Why is the demand for migration there continually growing till today there are hundreds of thousands of Jews who beg to gain immediate entry? Why has the interest in Zionism grown to immense proportions among all strata of the Jewish population? Are these symptoms of the bankruptcy of Zionism? Perhaps, as Comrade Morrow would have it, the success with which the Zionist movement has met is due to the "truly gigantic efforts" of Zionist propaganda. Or, should this growing tendency among the Jewish masses rather invite a Marxian analysis.

Migration has become an established characteristic of Jewish life. The migration to the U. S., to Argentine, or to Palestine has never been just an illusory whim, an empty ideal. It was motivated by serious economic factors. Petty-bourgeois idealists may portray Zionism as a movement which aims at building a "Jewish state," an "empire" and so on, but which Marxist will listen to such chatter, accept it at its face value, and even go so far as to refute earnestly the idea of Zionism because of its utopian portrayal by utopian Zionists.

Zionism is a movement which directs and concentrates the migratory stream into one territory. The anomaly of Jewish life is the fact that it is a national minority, which with the development of finance-capital and the strife and competition which it fosters upon the masses, gives rise to national competition, boycott, anti-semitism and physical and political measures which undermine the existence of the minority. This does not pertain to all minorities. For example, the United States government suppressed the anti-Japanese movement which broke out several years ago, because Japan could well retaliate, blow for blow. Here a definite equilibrium is established. But the Jewish minority is sacrificed upon the greedy altar of finance-capital which rips the means of existence out of its hands and passes them on to its own middle-class as a means of gaining political support. Furthermore, the Jews have for many years been forced to develop an "unhealthy" economy as middlemen, shop-keepers,

artisans and small-shop workers. Jewish industry and, likewise, the Jewish proletariat have always occupied the smallest and the very last phases of production, which are the first to suffer in times of crisis. The non-Jewish middle class which is sustained through government credits, is usurping the place formerly occupied by Jews. In Poland, for instance, where the number of non-Jewish stores has considerably increased during the last few years, the number of Jewish stores has systematically decreased. In short, the Jewish problem is an economic problem, which does not only, today, affect the entire Jewish population but has to a greater or lesser degree inflicted itself upon the major portion of the Jewish nation.

Since the conditions of over 6,000,000 Jews in Europe force a good section of them into the migratory stream each year, it is entirely correct to direct this stream away from those countries where they may sooner or later meet with the same circumstances, and direct it into Palestine where already the Jews have created a normal economy, wherein they are the dominating element. Thus, they free themselves from the peculiar plague called the "Jewish Question." "But," one may add, "is it not like going from bad to worse to settle in an imperialist-dominated country to become a victim of reactionary suppression?" It is true, the national question will find its complete solution in socialist society only. But the peculiarly "Jewish" tint becomes lost in Palestine. There it becomes a colonial-national question of a general nature, the Jewish proletariat taking its place in the world front of class struggle.

To make the difference clear let us draw from life. A Jewish worker in Poland is highly exploited—why? First, because he is a worker. But he is doubly exploited because his Jewish boss must under the prevailing political pressure produce cheaply-priced goods in order to compete. Let him organize and fight back? But the ratio of unemployed among the Jews is much higher than among the Poles, and it often happens that the Jewish employer is driven over the brink by a small shove. If the worker is unemployed, it is due to capitalism, yes—but he can get no relief and his chances of getting a job when there is one are very remote. All this—because he is a Jew. How truly did the Marxian Zionist, Ber Borochov state, "The Jewish proletariat is a Prometheus bound." The national question is a social, a class question. For those workers plagued by the Jewish question, the problem is once and for all to rid themselves of this plague, to become a normal proletariat and thus to liberate a mighty stream of energy into the channels of class struggle. In Palestine this becomes a reality. If a worker is highly exploited or unemployed—it is surely not because he is a Jew but because he exists in a capitalist system of society. The reaction is necessarily an impulse towards class struggle and not national struggle.

In Eastern and Central Europe there are 6,000,000 Jews suffering overtly or covertly from the "Jewish" anomaly. In the trading activities of the middle classes, in the liberal professions, in small industry, handicrafts, in agriculture, in industrial employment—in all these possible avenues of existence, the Jew is slowly and tortuously squeezed out, and for the young generation there is no ray of light whatever—the only hope is emigration. Comrade Morrow, will you still tell them that from a socialist viewpoint it is their duy to remain in Europe and starve themselves out of existence? In that case they will turn their backs

upon this "socialist" viewpoint. They seek an understanding and solution to a desperate problem. Or do we come before this mass, explain to them their own situation and offer the immediate solution which is national concentration. At one time it was necessary to explain why Palestine, and not America or Argentine. Today the doors of the world are closed. Besides, anti-semitism is gradually enveloping all countries where Jews have gained a foothold, and the future in these once popular countries of immigration is nohow clear. According to Z. Abramovitch of the Marxian Zionist movement in Palestine in his new English pamphlet, "Whither Palestine," there is an annual need for some 250,000 Jews who reach the point of economic annihilation, for immediate relief through migration. Of this number Palestine absorbed 80,000 in 1934 and 65,000 in 1935. But it is capable of satisfying the entire demand were it not for the imperialist policy of shut doors. Those doors can and should be opened through the combined pressure of the Palestinian and world proletariat.

The conditions of the Jews in Diaspora certainly generate a widespread nationalist and chauvinist psychology and tend to create petty-bourgeois illusions of national unity, which are carried over into Palestine. But, transplanted onto healthy soil, the class-conscious character of the Jewish proletariat is asserting itself. This process is to be gauged on the one hand by the increasing strength of the revolutionary party, the Left-Poale-Zion and Marxist circles, and on the other hand by the immense growth of the trade union opposition, under the direct leadership of the party. The platform of the opposition is based on class-struggle policy and includes international trade union unity for Arab and Jewish workers. The proletarian Zionists stand firmly on the soil of revolutionary Socialism. National concentration is not an end in itself but a means of gaining access to the front trenches of international proletarian struggle.

Economy and Politics in Palestine.

The economic situation in Palestine has suffered gross misrepresentation. There are no entirely accurate statistics because the government is interested in miscalculating for its own ends. For example, in April 1934 the government registered 14,000 unemployed, while at the same time the Department of Agriculture expressed great anxiety over being unable to gather in the harvest in time due to an acute shortage of labor, notwithstanding the influx of thousands of Bedouins from Transjordania and the Horan. After this, the publication of unemployment statistics ceased abruptly. Likewise, the bourgeois Zionists are not to be relied upon. The only reliable statistics are those objectively compiled by Z. Abramovitch.

Palestine has been in a state of prosperity during those very years that the economic stagnation reached its freezing point the world over—1932-35. During these years more than 20,000 Syrians migrated permanently into Palestine and tens of thousands of Bedouins found seasonal labor. All phases of economy, both Arab and Jewish, were developing at an unexcelled pace. Wages increased and the standard of living continually rose. In Syria and Egypt during 1931-35 the wage level was 2-3 piastre (1 piastre being 5c). In Palestine, in those districts not affected by Jewish colonization, it was 5-6 piastre, while in districts of Jewish immigration it was 8-12 piastre for unskilled labor, and skilled labor was

correspondingly higher. Wages of Jewish workers have more than doubled in the last decade. The income of the Palestinian peasant is 5-6 times higher than in the surrounding countries. Imports were especially numerous because industry could not expand quickly eonugh to meet the growing demand. Trade relations with the neighboring countries are continually extended. The Near East with its population of 20 million is a vast reserve army and internal market for capitalist development in and around Palestine. The citrus industry, in the general ever-narrowing world market, has found an ever-increasing demand which it cannot yet satisfy. This is evidently the "desperate situation" from which Comrade Morrow draws his own conclusions.

This situation can continue for an extended period since its source lies in the migration to Palestine of Jewish capital and labor. The imperialists find little room for economic exploitation in Palestine, but that does not exlude great possibilities through an organic development of capitalism, basing itself upon the vast market in the interior and the natural resources with which Palestine is blessed. 1. Oil and refinery industries. 2. Exploitation of the Dead Sea area with its great wealth of chemicals. 3. Development of the citrus industry. 4. Development of the Jordan Valley where vegetables ripen two months previous to their ripening in Europe. 5. Home industries such as cement, textiles and silks, olive oil and soaps, furniture, etc. 6. And most important, Palestine is mapped to be the port and commercial center of the entire Near East, a part played by this country in the days when the Near East flourished. Thus, the most elementary Marxian economic analysis demonstrates that even in this period of capitalist decline Palestine and the Near East have every opportunity of extensive growth and development.

"But," one may add, "we have forgotten about the great British Lion which can devour this mouse-like Palestine at one snap." No, we have not forgotten about the Lion. Let us examine the British interests. Palestine guards the Suez Canal. In fact a new canal is contemplated to extend from southern Palestine to the Red Sea. Why must the Suez Canal be guarded? Why a new, even longer canal. Simply for the reason that the development of Egypt as a capitalist country has created a numerous and powerful proletariat which more than once has already threatened British domination of the Suez. This means, that if Palestine is to guard the Suez, the Bagdad-Haifa oil line, and is to serve as a strategic military base—it is likewise necessary that Palestine remain undeveloped and without a revolutionary proletariat. In this light, the Balfour Declaration is a false promise. It has been scrapped.

But those conditions which generate the Jewish migration to Palestine have not been remedied and hence the conflict arises and a twofold policy ensues: First, to grasp at all means for retarding the progress of the country. Among them, 1. Direct blows at immigration through the reduced quota. 2. The law forbidding the sale of land to Jews. 3. Heavy duties on vital industrial necessities. 4. Lack of duty protection for the Palestinian industries. 5. Impeding the trade relations between Palestine and the surrounding countries. 6. Heavy taxation on industry and intensive agriculture. 7. Bad transportation facilities. 8. No government loans or credits. 9. A coalition with the feudal elements to

stir up national strife on religious pretexts and frighten off the prospective immigrants. Second, to divide and disorient the working class by means of national struggle and intense reactionary propaganda. But all the forces of the British Empire do not suffice to stay off the desperate Jewish masses, nor the industrial development of the land, nor the growing strength and unity of the Palestinian proletariat.

The latest riots which were for years prepared by the government and the reactionary feudals, with communist support, have by their sporadic, terroristic, non-mass character, proven to be the final blow to the futile policy of the forces essaying to cut short the growth of Palestine. The growth of the revolutionary party and the class-opposition in the trade-unions is the answer which the revolutionary socialists offer to the government, the feudals, the capitalists and the Old Guard coalitionists.

In attempting to prove that Jewish economy in Palestine is not "normal" Comrade Morrow has done considerably well for the statistics he adduced. But those statistics are not normal and therein lies the solution. There are not 12% of the Jewish sector active and dependent upon agriculture but 20-21% for 1933. Of them the so-called "socialist" collectives are but 11-12% and not 50%. They play a major role in propaganda only. 35% of the Jewish sector is supported by industry. Of that number only 26% are supported by building and the building materials, not one half. The workers are divided as follows, for 1933: Industry 28%; agriculture 22%; service 14%; white-collar 14%; building 8%; transport 6%. There is no doubt that for the stage which Jewish economy has attained this division of the population and its degree of productiveness is entirely normal.

Palestinian economy is extremely sensitive to political fluctuations, especially as the latter influence the Jewish immigration. The government intended, mechanically, to create a crisis and a panic by means of the riots, the closing of immigration and certain financial manipulations. It achieved partial success in this direction. Immigration quotas were outrageously lowered and the activity of capital decreased. This is but a conjecture which can be quickly overcome by increased immigration, legal and illegal. If militant pressure will be exerted by the Jewish and Arab toilers, of whom the government is most fearful, the doors of the land will be pried open to the benefit of the toiling population.

The international socialist movement must recognize the Zionist movement as a progressive historical force of national liberation. We must no longer isolate the revolutionary vanguard of Palestine by refusing them our understanding and support. The proletarian Zionist movement is the only truly socialist movement in Palestine. It has proven by its courageous physical and ideological perseverence that the great revolutionary upheaval in the Near East is being well prepared.

Socialism and Pacifism

Caroline F. Urie

THE article by James Burnham in the August number of the *American Socialist Monthly* raises several questions of potential detriment to the health and unity of the Socialist Party.

One of these is the question whether the party Resolution on War is delinquent in discussing the nature of war and the revolutionary struggle against it without "naming by name the persons and organizations" that propagate false ideas concerning that struggle. Comrade Burnham asserts that it is our party duty to "criticize, attack and expose these organizations," that we must "label these people and warn against them." He speaks of the "degraded and insidious form" of these ideas, of "pacifist and social-patriotic treachery" etc., and one gets the impression that it is in the spirit of unmasking a conspiracy that we must conduct this sort of attack.

But is this really a strong or sound socialist attitude or procedure? Is there not a grave danger that a campaign of attack directed against individuals and groups will degenerate into a mere sidetrack of personal abuse and recrimination — something far removed from the propagation of our socialist ideas and principles, which is our first duty? The whole process of "calling names" and "unmasking betrayals," with the heat and resentments they arouse, is the surest way of distracting attention from the main issues by shifting onto that low er ground that makes bourgeois political controversy often such a sordid business. Our socialist message is unassailable on its own merits, by the force of its own logic and coherence. Why waste our energies and belittle our cause attacking people, who of necessity express and illustrate the ideas and institutions against which our attack ought to be directed?

There are other points in Comrade Burnham's article with which one is tempted to take issue on grounds of socialist consistency and expediency. But by far the most important is that relating to pacifism.

Comrade Burnham speaks of the "deceptiveness of betrayal (sic) on the question of war that makes clarity so essential," and then proceeds to enumerate the various ambiguities and omissions in the Cleveland Resolution on War that contribute to this lack of clarity.

But an illustration of the ambiguities that he deprecates is his own ambiguity on the subject of pacifism. He makes the blanket charge against a sort of composite bogy of all the "57 varieties" of pacifism (from the bourgeois World-Peaceways - Cause - and - Cure - of - War brands to the War Resisters' International) that it is "neither friend nor ally in the revolutionary struggle against war, but, on the contrary, a subtle and dangerous enemy." He calls it "the conception of the struggle against war as a 'fight for peace' independent of the class struggle for workers' power;" asserts that it views war as "a thing apart from the relations of cause and effect;" that "it leaves the causes of war untouched and is consequently powerless to prevent war;" that it "hides the true nature of war," "promotes hopeless illusions concerning the problem of war," and, "when confronted with the actuality of war, passes over into social-patriotism and betrayal to the war."

And, having pronounced his "account of the nature of pacifism un-

questionably true," he warns socialists that they "can neither tolerate nor remain indifferent to pacifism and pacifist ideas. On the contrary, it is the duty of socialists to expose its fatal illusions and its false perspectives, to root out its influence over the masses." "Pacifism unrestricted," he says, "can suffocate the genuine struggle against war; it must be fought against and conquered."

But he prefaces all this with a complaint that the central omission of the Cleveland Resolution was "the lack of any explicit analysis of pacifism," and the insistence that "Pacifism must be analyzed and estimated correctly, and an attitude toward it established."

Well and good. But how about the above composite bogy?

A "correct analysis of pacifism" could hardly have failed to detect that there is a fundamental difference between the publicity stunts of the World Peaceways type of pacifism ("selling peace" to a public already deafened and deadened to advertising) — or the League of Nations Unions preoccupation with appeals to Imperialist Governments, with resolutions, pacts and protocols and other scraps of paper — and the principles and practice of the War Resisters' International, which include not merely individual and mass resistance to war whenever and wherever it shall occur, but also the recognition that the causes of war are inherent in the social and economic system—the W. R. I. membership being pledged to work continually for the supersession of this system by one based on economic and social justice as a first condition of world peace.

To include the diverse aims and methods of all pacifist movements under this sort of blanket indictment, as "subtle and dangerous enemies," is akin to lumping the Lemke Union Party, the Townsendites, the fascist Father Coughlin's League for Social Justice, Labor's Non-Partisan League and the Socialist Party, as the common enemies of capitalism! Until this confusion has been clarified, Comrade Burnham's case against pacifism misses its point.

Granted the validity of his charge against the various bourgeois pacifist groups — that they fail to attack the causes of war (I doubt emphatically the "subtlety and hypocrisy" he attributes to these movements) — does it not ignore the incalculable effect of their propaganda in arousing public sentiment to act as a check upon governments — a sort of dam against the forces that push towards war? Unquestionably, to delay the outbreak of war is to the advantage of revolutionary movements, whose opportunities for agitation and organization always risk savage suppression in a war situation. The chances of revolutionary success under a military dictatorship for a population crushed and exhausted by war are surely worse than where the "peacetime" conditions for propaganda and organization are still comparatively free.

If this be so, then, even for revolutionists, pacifism has a function to perform. At all times and in every way we must fight war itself, as well as the causes of war,—"lest war destroy our civilization and the progressive and radical movements with it."

Since, then, in addition to this function of immediate war-resistance, the War-Resisters' aim is a socialist aim, it would seem they do not come under Comrade Burnham's general indictment of pacifists—*unless* their choice of non-violent methods to achieve this aim could be considered a difficulty.

Is it a difficulty?

The Socialist Party in its Declaration of Principles and Resolution on War is not only committed to the repudiation of war, but also to the attainment of its ends through peaceful, democratic and orderly means, through cooperation with the organized and disciplined labor movement, the use of mass resistance, the general strike, the refusal of cooperation with all war-preparations, etc. And though it promises to render "every support" to the colonial struggle for freedom and to "resort to whatever means may be necessary to crush counter-revolutionary movements" in a Socialist State, it expressly repudiates armed insurrection by a minority as "romantic impossibilism;" and nowhere does it suggest the use of violence as *mandatory* upon the party membership.

Unquestionably there is widespread opinion in the party that, in emergencies, the use of violence is necessary as a sort of desperate last resort. There is certainly no "clarity" on this subject. Violence is inherently so at variance with socialist method—which relies on education, organization, cooperation, the respect for personality implicit in democracy—that the question of violence remains vague—a matter for improvisation rather than planning or preparation. (From the point of view of those who put their trust in violence, this is culpable negligence, since such last-minute improvisation — sniping with chance weapons from behind barricades—is futile and childish in this day of highly-disciplined and specialized technical warfare, aerial attacks, armored tanks, etc.)

Supposing this ill-defined reliance on violence wherever it "may be necessary," represents majority opinion in the party, what of the minority who reject violence of thought or action, not only personally, but as a social method, because of profound intellectual conviction *that it is ineffective*—that it does not permanently settle any conflict but leads only to further violence,—that victories won by violence require force and violence to maintain them, and that in such an atmosphere of restraint the spirit of Socialism and its ideals cannot survive? Is there not room in the party for those who ask only the opportunity to demonstrate the workability of the methods of disciplined group non-violence—the strike, the boycott, collective non-cooperation; who offer as their contribution to the struggle for economic and social justice, their utmost endeavors that violence, bloodshed, hatred and enmity may be lessened and ultimately eliminated from the struggle and from the world?

Surely there is no conflict of *purpose* here—merely a question of tolerance regarding methods. Does not the health and unity of the party depend in great measure on such tolerance?

(An Answer to C. F. Urie)

I SHALL not answer at length Comrade Urie's criticism of my article, since I believe that the questions she raises are sufficiently covered in the article itself. I may remark in passing that she does not challenge any step in my analysis, nor meet any specific point which I raised. I wish, however, to comment briefly on certain statements in her communication:

1. I agree entirely with Comrade Urie in her rejection of the practice of "personal abuse and recrimination." My criticism of pacifism, as of every other policy or program which I regard as false, is always political, not personal, in character. Nevertheless, criticism cannot be allowed to remain merely ab-

stract in character. False policies and programs are propagated by human beings and actual organizations. Consequently, to root out the influence of these false policies and programs, we necessarily attempt, along with our abstract criticism, either to persuade or force the human beings and organizations to abandon these policies; or, if that is impossible, we must neutralize or destroy the opportunities which these human beings and organizations have for propagating their policies. If we are against the People's Front in theory, then we are against it also in practice. And we must say so. If not, our theories act only as a pseudo-left cover for anti-Marxist practice. And just so with pacifism. If pacifism, as I contend, acts as an obstacle to, and substitute for, revolutionary struggle, then we must say so; and say so not merely in the abstract, but in terms of the actual persons and organizations which propagate the ideas of pacifism. Otherwise, once again, we must share political responsibility for the disastrous consequences to which pacifism leads.

2. Comrade Urie objects that I lump together the "57 varieties" of pacifism. I did so, in my opinion correctly, from the point of view of the general principle which I was analyzing: namely, "the conception of the struggle against war as a 'fight for peace' independent of the class struggle for workers' power." This conception is common and basic to every variety of pacifism. I was not, however, discussing the *practical* question of just what our methods should be in dealing with different types of pacifist organization. Here, differences should be taken into account (though these differences are secondary). A sincere pacifist attitude, based on a genuine hatred of war, may well provide a kind of opening for the penetration of socialist ideas. But in such cases also, our duty as socialists is not to stop with sympathy for the sincerity of the pacifist, but to educate the pacifist to understand that genuine opposition to war must in actuality be translated into the class struggle for workers' power and for Socialism.

3. Comrade Urie is particularly concerned to defend the War Resisters. I do not find the exception justified. The War Resisters' platonic recognition that "the causes of war are inherent in the social and economic system"—a recognition unaccompanied by a statement of the sole method by which that system can be supplanted by another in which war can be eliminated—is of little importance: it can be matched by a hundred organizations. What is important is to note that the War Resisters explicitly reject not merely "international war" but also "civil war;" and this they do not merely in the abstract, but concretely by calling for neutrality in the present armed struggle in Spain and the approaching armed struggles in France. It is surely not necessary to point out how far distant such an attitude is from that of Socialism. Even if individual War Resisters interpret this to mean merely the moral advice that the workers "ought not take arms" since, as Comrade Urie writes, violence "does not permanently settle any conflict," it amounts merely to telling the workers that they should accept the triumph of reaction and their martyrdom without a struggle. It is, thus, in the hour of crisis, no more than a secular version of the age-long call of the Church for peace and submission—a call whose social function in every society has been to give religious sanction to the "legal" violence of the exploiters against the

masses, and religious consolation to reward the oppressed for clinging to their chains.

James Burnham.

Who Is a Socialist?

Sol Perrin

At one time it was comparatively simple to answer the question, "Who is a Socialist?" Now it is becoming increasingly difficult. Any answer today would need to be broken up into subdivisions and with additional parentheses for qualifications and exceptions. All of this is slightly confusing to comrades who thought they were in the Socialist Party to end capitalism and to usher in a cooperative society of peace, plenty and freedom.

Are you of the left wing? Yes. But are you a left winger? That seems to make all the difference, and the smile of greeting changes to a sneer of contempt. The one who gets the question in first has a marked advantage. He can swagger away feeling very content with himself, leaving his victim vainly trying to explain. And there is no explanation.

Today, in the Socialist Party, there is general agreement, except among recalcitrants here and there, on major policy. All of us want an active, alive, militant party. We agree on work in mass organizations. We agree on the position on war. We agree on the question of united action with communists. We agree on the Farmer-Labor Party question. If there are disagreements, particularly with the latter, they are slight and unimportant.

Considerable confusion does exist, however, on one matter:—what we think of our comrades in Europe. In one fell swoop, all the parties abroad have been condemned. Everybody is out of step but Johnnie.

We dismiss the Scandinavian parties because they seem to concern themselves with building powerful cooperatives. Nobody seems to know much about their work, even though they head governments, and everyone promptly proceeds to forget all about them. But everyone feels certain that they do not amount to much and that they are reformist.

About France and Spain we have more definite pronouncements, if not more information and analysis. Our press has carried some articles pointing out that the people's fronts are theoretically wrong, that they are nothing if not class collaboration in government and must, therefore, be condemned. (It is highly debatable whether the people's front is the same as coalition government, as understood by socialists. To enter a cabinet in order to govern for the sake of the nation is one thing, to form a government of left parties, with liberal middleclass support, in order to fight a fascist danger and with a program of workers' reforms, is another.)

The outward response, but not, in many cases, the private beliefs, of the comrades to these strange goings on is not unlike that in a famous tale, a children's story wherein a tailor had made a garment for a king. It was proclaimed far and wide that it was the most beautiful garment ever made. No one had seen the garment but everyone professed to see it. When the king appeared in public, everybody would say Oh and Ah and marvel at the garment's beauty, although the king actually was dressed in nothing but his underwear.

The length to which our actions can

go was illustrated recently when a suggestion was made that prominent European socialists be invited to speak in this country during the presidential campaign. This suggestion had to be rejected because, it was sadly pointed out, there did not seem to be anyone whose policy we agreed with. A leader from a Scandinavian party would embarrass us because he might speak about social security and cooperatives, and voters would think we were reformists. A leader from France or Spain would mention the people's front and then where would we be. Better not to invite anyone and remain in our splendid, but correct, isolation.

This dog-in-the-manger game being played by party publicists is not going to get us anywhere and may do us harm. The party's ability to organize the masses, its capacity for growth and its chances for success are not dependent upon what we think of the people's front, a tactic far removed from the problems facing us in this country. Nor does it appear likely that under our form of government, the problem of a people's front will be one that we shall have to face. Certainly, to classify our members as left wingers and non-left wingers on the question of the people's front is both foolish and a disservice to the party.

History has sufficiently shown that no hard and fast rule can be laid down on gaining power. The experience of no two socialist parties is alike. The experience of no two fascist successes is alike. Certain policies followed by socialist parties may be criticized more readily than others. What we as socialists should demand at all times is openminded and careful analysis of events. The experience of the people's fronts in France and Spain, and of the parties in the Scandinavian countries must be continuously observed, studied, reported and analyzed. To give expression to a hard and fast rule and to say "we're agin it" will not satisfy intelligent comrades. Neither does saying "I'm agin it" make one a left winger. The capacity to learn and profit by experience is the best attribute of a socialist.

A Letter from a Subscriber and Our Reply

Dear Comrade:-

Enclosed please find money order in the amount of $2.25 due you as per your statement.

I regretted very much that the Quarterly was changed to a monthly because, it seemed to me, that once every three months was often enough to make a spectacle of our party before the world.

How many of 130 million care whether or not we have "theoretical clarity in the Socialist Party." As if we could have clarity during the process of revolutionary fermentation! But millions there are who do care that we have a united working class.

Our bent for theoretical quarrels indicates that we have not yet outgrown the intellectual creeping age. That makes a poor appeal to the suffering masses. However, I want to watch the growth. So send it along.

Dear Comrade:

In your letter you state:

> "I regretted very much that the Quarterly was changed to a monthly because, it seemed to me, that once every three months was often enough to make a spectacle of our party before the world."

This statement is altogether unwarranted. In fact, to us it betrays a complete ignorance of the work of the old American Socialist Quarterly and of the present American Socialist Monthly.

You cannot quote an article, a paragraph, a line in the issues we have brought out in the five years of our existence, which justify the statement that "we make a spectacle of the party before the world." Quite on the contrary, we have letters from party leaders the world over congratulating us on bringing out the first mature socialist magazine that the American Socialist Party has sponsored in twenty years.

In what way do we "make a spectacle of the party?" When we discuss the party's position on war, do we make a spectacle of the party? When we analyze the New Deal and show it up as a last line defense of capitalism, do we make a spectacle of the party? When we print Felix Cohen's excellent discussion of the *Myth of Legality,* do we make a spectacle of the party? When we discuss the position of the middle class in America do we make a spectacle of the party? Or do you object to *any* discussion? Is your real complaint that we want the world to know where the Socialist Party stands on matters that the party propaganda press does not, perhaps cannot, discuss? You have made a serious charge against us, and it is up to you to prove your point.

Later in your letter you ask "How many of the 130 million care whether or not we have theoretical clarity in the Socialist Party?" The answer is, of course, very few. A few hundred, perhaps. But your question betrays your failure to understand what the American Socialist Monthly is trying to do. Please try to understand that it is not a propaganda paper, published to reach the masses. We have the *Socialist Call,* the *Milwaukee Leader* and other weekly papers for that, although no one will pretend that the 130 million give a rap about what these papers print. The American Socialist Monthly is published for quite another purpose. It is intended to discuss the "process of revolutionary fermentation." It is intended to draw the lessons from our mistakes. It is intended to orient ourselves, within the party. Will you assert that that is unnecessary? Are you prepared to say that the Socialist Party at this moment is so well-trained, so well educated in domestic and foreign problems, so clear as to its program, its tactics and its policies that discussion is entirely out of place? As a socialist you should know that precisely because we are in a "process of revolutionary ferment," we must have constant discussion, constant examination of our position if we are to avoid fatal mistakes.

You say that "millions there are who do care that we have a united working class." Show me those millions. Show me besides, that it is incompatible with theoretical clarity to have a united working class. Or to work for a united working class. It would be a relatively easy thing to have a united working class on a *theoretically unsound program.* We could unite the working class today if we became nationalistic, chauvinistic and utopian. We could take a leaf out of Hitler's book and unite huge sections of the working class against some scapegoat or other. A united working class is not enough. We must have a working class united to fight capitalism and ready to achieve its own liberation. To attain that means a far greater degree of theoretical clarity than even the great parties of Germany and England ever attained. The failure of the German Social Democracy is traceable directly to its lack of theoretical clarity. The stagnation of the British Labor Party arises from the fact that the Labor Party does not know quite what it is or what it

wants to be. Is it a party of "the whole people," or is it the party of "the working class?" A little more theoretical clarity would make a vast difference in its history, and in the history of the world.

We trust you will read this letter in the spirit in which it was intended. We trust you will look up the files of the American Socialist Quarterly and of the American Socialist Monthly and admit that we have never made a spectacle of the party before the world. And we trust you will re-examine your own position and realize the need for theoretical clarity.

Book Reviews

THE DECLINE AND RISE OF THE CONSUMER

by Horace M. Kallen. D. Appleton-Century Co., N. Y. 484 pages. $2.75.

Accustomed to over-optimistic presentation of the case for consumers cooperation, uncritical enthusiasts of the cooperative movement are hailing Horace Kallen's "The Decline and Rise of the Consumer" as the Book of the Century. "What Marx did for Socialism, Kallen does for Cooperation," gushes one cooperator. Others, taken in by Kallen's ability to spin yards and yards of impressive polysyllables where inches would suffice, ascribe to this latest contribution to confused economic thinking a clarity and realism which sober examination fails to substantiate.

Kallen's avowed purpose is to present a philosophy of consumers cooperation. He proceeds by means of a superficial examination of the institutions of society throughout the ages. He concludes that the key to the intelligent understanding of history lies in the distinction and the conflict between a producer and a consumer mentality. In primitive, slave and feudal societies, Kallen observes, those who were sheer consumers and produced nothing, were the ruling classes and he sees good in them because their consumer activities were free activities in which the idealism of mankind was given free reign to develop. With the coming of capitalism and its development, or rather, its perversion (the facts of capitalism do not conform with its ideal) he is alarmed to find that the consumer mentality in all its sweetness and light has been displaced by the sordid materialism of the producer. It is as though we have fallen upon evil days, for the producer has got us! Through the cooperative movement he hopes to bring about again the primacy of the consumer in his highest development. Kallen, however, has fallen into an obvious error. He has confused the producer with those who control production. He has revived Luddism and is smashing the machine. It is ironic that in our system, the sheer consumer, whom Kallen so extolled, is the capitalist who does not produce but exists parasitically upon the sweat of producers by a constant toll of interest, rent and profit. Kallen's trap is his rejection of the Marxian concept of surplus value. This explains his belief that capitalists are producers. Had his inquiry been more critical, he would perhaps have recognized in the capitalist the modern prototype of those venerable other "sheer" consumers, the chieftain,

the master and the baron and that this consumer has not declined but that another consumer, he who also produces, the working-class consumer, shall rise to displace him.

Mr. Kallen also applies this distinction to the individual and again he finds a conflict similar to that which he finds in society. In each individual there is the consumative function which is a "n a t u r a l" function involving aims and values and which is tied up with goodness and idealism. On the other hand, there is the productive function which is an acquired function derived from necessity which is snarled up with animal nature, acquisitiveness and materialism. Kallen is most vehement in denouncing Marxian Socialism for its emphasis upon production, the baser, "unnatural," materialistic aspect of man. Once more, Kallen's error is either a failure to ascertain the real facts or a deliberate avoidance of those facts which do not fit his pretty mosaic. He ascribes to his distinction a morality which simply does not apply. Consumption and production whether idealistic or materialistic, natural or acquired, may be either good or bad depending upon the point of view and the use to which put. Again Kallen blames the machine instead of its master. At least, Kallen attempts to present the argument for consumer's cooperation on a reasoned, scientific basis, however faulty. Not as much can be said for his unreasoned attack upon Marxism.

The greatest indictment of this book, however, lies neither in its evasion of disturbing fact nor the illogic of his theory nor the fear of Marxism. It lies in his utter failure to grasp the significance of the state as an instrument of oppression and the relation of fascism to capitalism. At the close of his book Kallen indulges in a fantasy at once grotesque, absurd and dangerous. He permits President Robert Adam Owen Smith to look backward from the year 2044 and review the road traversed by Consumer's Cooperation to power. In the breakdown of capitalism which precipitates a fascist crusade against Communism, somehow the cooperators obtain control of their democratic government and suppress the wicked fascists. Whereupon by some unexplained legerdemain the task of production and distribution is transferred to the cooperative movement and the world is made safe for democracy and becomes the cooperative commonwealth. In short, Kallen predicts cooperation together with the spirit of liberal bourgeois democracy will be capable of warding off fascism and Communism and prove the successful middle way. This book may yet prove an instrument of disservice to the working class should its influence spread by creating a false sense of security in the omnipotence of the cooperative movement.

Although socialists will sharply disagree with Kallen's philosophy of consumers cooperation, they regard the cooperative movement as an important, valuable working class instrument which together with other working class instruments such as the trade union movement and the Socialist Party, constitute the full front in the struggle against capitalist oppression.

BENJAMIN H. WOLF

RULERS OF AMERICA:

A Study of Finance Capital, by Anna Rochester, International Publishers, N. Y. 1936. pp. 367, $2.50.

Between the covers of this well-printed and documented book, Anna Rochester has assembled basic data on

how the oligarchy of wealth in America absorbs much of its wealth, exerts its State-power as the "executive committee of the ruling class," exploits men and resources everywhere, exercises its control in key industries and banking, and presents a challenge to the "working class and its allies" for ultimate victory.

The book is divided into two main sections and a conclusion. Part I is a neat summary of the background and emergence of the chief representatives of the financial and industrial overlords. Here is a description of the octopus spread of the Morgans, Rockefellers, Mellons, DuPonts, and secondary groups. The extent of their domain is statistically painted. Their development has not been even nor uniform.

> (pp. 104-105) "Details of control over banks and industrial corporations vary, and even among large concerns, all clearly dominated by finance capital, we find three stages of development. A few important companies —and many smaller ones—are still controlled by a family or small group of associates who own the majority of the stock (e. g. Mellons). In the second stage, control is held through a considerable minority stock ownership (e. g. Rockefeller in Oil and Coal). In the third stage, control has been separated from stock ownership. (e. g. Morgan)"

Part II—in a somewhat repetitious manner—approaches the same problem in order to show how the oligarchy actually controls selected industries: oil, copper, power, chemicals, aviation, steel, railroads, etc. Two chapters on farmers and small traders are not so well handled as the others.

Finally, the conclusion briefly describes capitalism in crisis both in its imperialist and national characteristics. Marxist in approach (p. 10) the author maintains that "the general crisis in capitalism is rooted in these two groups of inner conflicts: (1) the sharpened political conflict between the capitalist class and the working class, and (2) the contradiction between productive forces and the market under capitalism which has been greatly intensified in the post-war years." Miss Rochester at this point correctly concludes that the line-up becomes clearer between capitalist rule including fascism and fascist trends on the one side and the rising class-conscious forces of the workers and their allies on the other side. (p. 287)

From this should follow, by inescapable logic, the final conflict arising out of a second World War or other revolutionary crisis between "capitalist rule, including fascism and fascist trends" and the working class, but curiously enough, in a last chapter the author so far forgets her own preceding analysis as to posit the value of mutual assistance pacts (i.e. collective security) as a weapon by which the workers' state, U. S. S. R., in alliance with capitalist states can, successfully struggle against war. (p. 303) Also in the same last chapter Miss Rochester (p.303) correctly recognizes "class-conscious workers" as the "essential innermost core of the (anti-war) movement" but then goes on (p. 304) to speak of a "People's Front against fascism" which in every given instance of the People's Front is a mixed-class movement that virtually adopts a non-working class program!

However, the value of the book in its array of useful informational material is not marred by the confusion in its last minute attempt to fit into a logically inconsistent and misleading conclusion.

Frank Newton Trager